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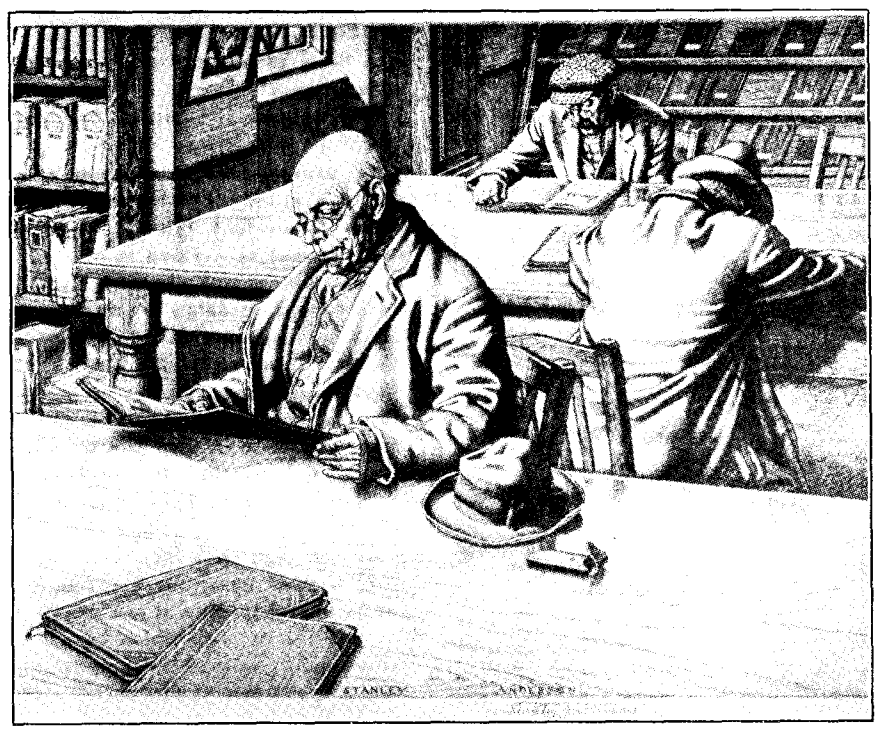
The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

VOLUME VIII | NEW YORK SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1931 | NUMBER 23



THE READING ROOM
FROM "FINE PRINTS OF THE YEAR" (MINTON, BALCH)

Still Standing

GEORGE WASHINGTON. REPUBLICAN ARISTOCRAT. By BERNARD FAY. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1931. $4.

Reviewed by JOHN CORBIN

THE debunkers have had their day with Washington and are heard no more. Rupert Hughes (whose iconoclasm was, in point of fact, directed not so much against the Father of his Country as against Parson Weems and the Weems-minded multitude) has risen in his second and third volumes to the pinnacles of awe and admiration. When his first volume shocked good people, President Coolidge took one of them to the White House window, pointed to the Washington Monument, and said, "It is still standing." Today the only question is whether Mr. Hughes may not be descried on top of it, waving the flag. This much can be said for modern skepticism: it has destroyed, for all time, *deo volente*, the attitudinizing heroics of nineteenth-century idolatory. More must be said for the mood that has followed. As monograph succeeds monograph on the eve of the bicentenary of Washington's birth, a new image is arising which is more nearly sublime in proportion as it is more frankly and candidly human.

Bernard Fay's little volume gives no evidence of such vast researches as lay behind "The Revolutionary Spirit in France and America" and "Benjamin Franklin"; but those researches have contributed largely to his understanding of the epoch in hand. More clearly than in any other study, the figure of Washington stands forth in its relation to the European and American background. For the rest, Professor Fay is content to rely on some half dozen of American researchers, presenting no notable contribution of his own. He accepts the new reading as to Washington's doubts and fears when the Convention was proposed which eventually wrote the Constitution. As against scandalous gossip, demonstrably false so far as it is a matter of record, he accepts the verdict of Washington's contemporaries and of recent investigators that his sexual morals were unimpeachable. As to the lifelong adoration of Sally Fairfax, at which the nineteenth century so pitifully boggled, he agrees with recent students that it was well known to both families, including Martha Custis, and was throughout an affair of the highest nobility, beauty, and pathos. With regard to Mr. Hughes especially, his debt is generously acknowledged as it is pervasive. Admitting a doubt as to Hughes's "attitude" and "point of view," he declares that they are "sincere" and that " his work is thorough and his book exceedingly stimulating."

As to Washington's generalship in the field, Professor Fay renders no verdict. In all probability a verdict is impossible. The staring deficiencies of his army and his supplies, and the impotent wrongheadedness of the Continental Congress to which he so magnanimously subjected himself, might well have frustrated the most consummate strategist. But true generalship includes other and higher attributes, and here Professor Fay's verdict is clarion-toned. Candidly acknowledging the "long series of defeats" he says this of Yorktown: "to have rallied two navies from over the sea and four armies over a continent, to have led them to a fixed place at a fixed time and to have obtained a definitive success without too much effort was an achievement which Cæsar or Hannibal in all their glory had never attained. It was an achievement of a clear and far-seeing sense of the reality of things, and of transcendent moral and soldierly authority. With regard to the proportionate importance of French and American forces in the final engagement Fay makes no comment, as becomes a foreigner and a Frenchman; but he clearly states facts which we too often ignore. The presence of the French fleet was, indeed, a triumph of the diplomacy of Washington, aided by Lafayette; but without the aid of France the whole campaign would have been impossible. Against 7,600 British Washington had only 7,000 Americans. The French soldiers numbered 9,000 and the French sailors 23,000. Those are figures which we should engrave in memory.

Professor Fay's subtitle, "Republican Aristocrat," was doubtless meant to chal-

(*Continued on page* 408)

*Science Reaches Literature**

By HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

THERE was something curiously unsatisfying in the humanist controversy which boomed and fizzed its way into silence a year or so ago. Strokes were delivered, opinions urged, authorities called upon, and yet in spite of the poets, critics, scholars of every shade and breed who sooner or later were involved in the discussion there was a haziness in argument and a failure to meet face to face except in abuse and expletive which made more than one bystander question whether the combatants would ever agree as to the issues over which they fought. It was like Tennyson's last battle in the West, where

Friend and foe were shadows in the mist,
And friend slew friend not knowing whom
he slew.

And it is little wonder that after it was all over many an interested lay reader asked, "Yes, and after all, just what is humanism?"

The perplexity of the onlooker was justified, for the battle between elder statesmen and the rebels had been chiefly fought in areas of authority, opinion, and taste in which no final answer could be given, and where the combatants too often seized any weapon (and often a rusty one) that was handy. And it did not escape comment that the classics of the controversy ignored the new sciences of human nature, the humane sciences as Mr. Eastman calls them, sociology and psychology, except for a reiterated warning that science must keep out. It was like a St. Patrick's Day riot where everyone is welcome except the police.

Now it is a tenable belief that in every question where literature, poetry, art are concerned, the last word will have to be spoken by that faculty or wisdom which is called sometimes taste and sometimes intuition, and which is easier described than defined, for certainly all definitions offered of something recognized by everyone are notoriously unsatisfactory. Literature, which shows what life is like without necessarily explaining it, is animate, like life itself, and neither literature nor the taste which approves it are defined by the calories and flexions which make possible their activities.

But this last word will be futile if all the evidence and explanation which science can supply is not included in the answer. We are much too far along the road of exact knowledge to scorn (as did many in the humanist controversy) the aids to an understanding of the psychology or the biology or the sociology of literature which science already affords. Psychology, for example, is as indispensable to a study of language, the medium through which literature operates, as physiology to a control of athletics. It was to be expected, therefore, that some critic who knew his psychology as well as his literature, would appear when the dust had settled on a peace without victory, to say that the real battle was just to begin. I am glad that this critic is Max Eastman, for his lucid style, his quick and clear thinking, his nice taste in literature have already been demonstrated in his "The Enjoyment of Poetry," and guarantee a lively contest free from rhetoric or obscurantism. And in fact his new book, "The Literary Mind," is excellently written, well documented, powerfully argued, and to be recommended to the intelligent reader as well as to the specialist.

For the next decades in criticism are going to be exciting. Literature and the arts are approaching, if they have not already arrived at, the testing ground on which orthodox religion stood its trial at the end of the last century. Every aspect of what we used to call esthetics must be redefined, revalued, and seen in whatever light can be shed from the new sciences. As anthropology and biology and psychology were put into relation with orthodox Christianity, so now psychology and sociology, and especially psychology, are to be oriented with literature.

The thesis of Mr. Eastman's book is a simple one. Poetry once purported to contain, and if one goes far enough back, did contain, the fine essence of the whole of knowledge. It was wisdom, it was facts, it was also experience. The splendid confidence of the poets of the Renaissance was due to their experience of "the stimulus of that birth of real knowledge which has created our modern world, but without feeling pushed aside by it—without losing the naïve conviction which emerged with them out of the Middle Ages, countersigned by Aristotle, that poetry itself is knowledge, and that knowledge can go no higher than the poet raises it." After them began that division of labor which has more and more assigned to science the province of knowledge, not knowledge of what things essentially *are*, for that is impossible of

* THE LITERARY MIND. By MAX EASTMAN. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1931. $2.50.

This Week

VIGNETTE FOR CHRISTMAS EVE.
By FLORENCE RIPLY MASTIN.

"MEMOIRS OF PRINCE VON BÜLOW."
Reviewed by WILLIAM L. LANGER.

"THE NEGRO AUTHOR."
Reviewed by JAMES WELDON JOHNSON.

"THE OZARKS."
Reviewed by STANLEY VESTAL.

"THE UNIVERSE IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN PHYSICS."
Reviewed by LEIGH PAGE.

"MAN'S OWN SHOW: CIVILIZATION."
Reviewed by GEOFFREY PARSONS.

"SIR WALTER RALEIGH."
Reviewed by CHARLES DAVID ABBOTT.

"STEPPING WESTWARD."
Reviewed by ARTHUR COLTON.

A SMALL RESERVATION.
By ELINOR WYLIE.

THE SILVER SEASON.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

Next Week, or Later

"MR. AND MRS. PENNINGTON."
Reviewed by STANLEY WENT.

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exact comprehension, but knowledge of relationships. Hygiene, government, physics, biology, ethics, psychology, all of which have been at one time or another the theme and content of poetry, have been taken over in that great advance of science which is the outstanding phenomenon of the modern world.

But literature has refused to give up lightly its extensive claims upon the primary attention of humanity. Even as late as the latter nineteenth century, Matthew Arnold is still calling it the criticism of life; even as late as the twentieth century, the New Humanists, disregarding the humane sciences, which by that time had accumulated impressive data for the explanation of experience, are maintaining that science is valuable only for the lower plane of things, and that man's higher nature can be interpreted only by literature, philosophy, or religion.

The artists themselves (Mr. Eastman continues) have been less dogmatic, but they have felt their sphere of influence shrinking beneath them. The modernist poet has given up as futile the attempt to teach, to preach, to interpret, or even to criticize, realizing that knowledge is essentially the province of the scientist. He has retreated into "pure poetry" which is content to intensify experience and heighten consciousness of things as they are. And yet he still clings (like the critics) to the priestly prestige of the literary craft, and so makes a mystery of his experience, relapsing into that cult of unintelligibility to which one of the chapters of this book is devoted. Joyce, Cummings, Edith Sitwell, make little attempt to *communicate* at all, although communication is the primary business of literature. And these moderns, whether writing creatively or critically, oscillate between anarchy and orthodoxy (as T. S. Eliot's example illustrates) because they are aware of the futility in the modern world of a poetry which competes with science as a contributor to new and ordered knowledge.

Hence, too, the sense of superficiality among teachers and critics of literature. The ground slides away from under them. They begin to realize that the ethics, the psychology, the history, or the sociology they try to draw from literature will not stand comparison in its exactitude with the products of science. They refuse to be mere purveyors of joy, refuse to be mere interpreters of the experience embodied in literature, are indeed not entirely competent to be the latter because of their lack of training in psychology, and hence rebound, the critics into mere rhetoric about "beauty," "prophecy," or "values," the teachers and scholars into the study of literary history, which at least gives them a body of facts to disinter and a standing as scientific investigators.*

And what is the cure? The cure for poets and novelists and dramatists, is to realize that whatever may have been true for Isaiah and Shakespeare, they must forego the search for factual relationships and be content with intensifying experience and with the depiction of what to their sensitive minds things essentially *are*. Their business is with life, as lived, not with its explanation—or rather, their explanations, as in "Hamlet," are not the exact analyses of the psychologist, but the felt experience of cause and effect, of complexity and perplexity, which recreates life as it was nobly and most troublously lived. And they must escape from the childish muddle into which the dominance of mechanism in our generation has thrown them, have confidence in the validity and immense importance of their recreation of life, and communicate their experience with the lucidity and confidence of a Horace or a Chaucer.

As for the critics and the teachers, they should be guides to the intensified experience which is literature, and must equip themselves, not merely with literary history and a knowledge of the masterpieces, but also with the new humane sciences which are already competent to throw light upon the methods of genius to an extent far beyond their present use. The sense of caste, the social privilege, and the financial opportunities, which inhere in a class that has taken over many of the perquisites of the church, are the real reasons (so Mr. Eastman says) why men of letters, professors of literature, and literary critics refuse to admit that they are no longer the elect among "those who know."

This argument, which I hope I have not over-simplified, Mr. Eastman advances with erudition, wit, and a wide reference to authorities, using very frequently the deadly method of self-conviction, in which the humanist or professor is quoted against himself, or in words which under careful analysis show an underlying confusion. And indeed it would be wise for the subjects of his attack to read this book with care and admit its at least relative validity, for there is no escaping some of its more important conclusions, which, indeed, in some instances have already been driven home by that other iconoclast of literary criticism, I. A. Richards (whose definition of poetry, however, Eastman ably attacks in an appendix).

We must grant, I think, Eastman's history of the division of labor between science and poetry, and his contention that knowledge, defined as accurate information as to measurable relationships, belongs to science, or will belong before science has reached its term. We must grant, also, his further contention, that critics and teachers (though not necessarily poets) must have as part of their equipment a deep-lying knowledge of psychology and sociology. We must grant these contentions, although enough is here admitted to reorganize every graduate school of literature, the teaching methods of the majority of courses in English, and the critical approach of a whole generation of literary critics. Indeed I feel that "The Literary Mind" and Richards's "Practical Criticism" are two books (the forerunners of many) appearing at a crucial moment in the history of literary criticism and the practice of education in literature, which cannot be carefully read by those deeply concerned without one of those shifts of direction, slight perhaps, but important, which mark the turns in a road.

And yet, valuable as are the general theories of this new school which is trying to bring science to bear upon literature as it has been brought to bear upon everything else in modern life, their entire rightness is most disputable, and even such close arguers as Mr. Eastman argue sometimes strangely.

He thwacks away cheerfully on the dusty backs of what he calls the left wing of the teachers of literature, calling upon them to say what they get from their absorption in facts, dates, and sources but facts, dates, and sources. I should say myself that not their failure to define accurately their ends, but their lack of concern with any end that is literary, is their chief offense. But surely these patient researchers in literary history are following his precepts in applying to the study of literature all that they can get from the science in history and the science of philology; and surely when his reformed scholars shall plunge into psychology (which I trust by that time will have more matters of agreement beyond physiology than at present) they too, being human and therefore easily obsessed by the tangible, will lose sight of that joy of experience, to which they are to be guides, in a debauch of psychological analyses of the states of consciousness of Hamlet and Joyce's Ulysses!

But it is when his slings and arrows fall upon what he calls the right wing of the teachers and the critics that questions most spring up in protest. It is no personal feeling that leads me to choose this point in his argument for a rejoinder, although somewhat to my surprise I find myself classified in this group, and the statements of my own purporting to define the essential nature of literature, which he quotes, stand analysis, I freely admit, no better than the citations from more distinguished authorities. I speak with humility not resentment upon entering further into a subject so full of pitfalls both of language and of logic, and only ask that the would-be scientists also will try not to be overweening.

The crucial question is the nature of "literary truth." A volume could be written upon this theme because it involves the whole question of the nature, the use, and the scope of literature. I shall restrict what I have to say to a single question, but that one, so it seems to me, fundamental. Is there *no* essential and unique value in pure literature beyond the intensification of experience which Mr. Eastman assigns to it? Is there no such thing as poetic truth beyond truth to experience?

Mr. Eastman is scornful. "A literary truth," he says, "may therefore be defined—provisionally at least—as a truth which is either uncertain or comparatively unimportant." That is, it is a truth which cannot be verified by science and so uncertain, or it is a truth-to-facts, like the sociology of Zola's novels, comparatively unimportant in comparison with the solid discoveries of science.

Let the "unimportant" ride and consider the "uncertain." What is the area of the uncertain in life? Not the cure of cancer or of war, not the mechanism of the electron or of light. We are quite willing to admit the potential power of science to cope with these relationships. What is most uncertain is precisely the nature of reality. Now if one asserts that the only reality with which we are concerned is the reality of the material world, then it is possible to say that literature, which is not the best agency for the analysis of material fact, must be regarded merely as a register of experience, a purveyor of joy and of heightened consciousness. But this is only an assertion. It is sure that material reality is not ultimate. Both biologists and physicists assume a cause which escapes analysis. A chair is demonstrably not what we see or feel, certainly not a mathematical formula, and presumably a manifestation of some ultimate and fundamental reality. To exclude, then, from poetry, which deals, not with knowledge, but with the experience of things as they are, the possibility of an apprehension of reality beyond measurement, is quite as dogmatic as to assume that it is the fount of all wisdom.

This is not to argue for "inspiration" or "transcendentalism" or for any other form of knowledge which can be compared with the concrete knowledge that science affords. It is to say no more than this:—that if there is any reality behind experience and not susceptible to the grasp of science, if there is any quality, uncertain, unprovable, not analyzable, which is apprehended as a whole not as a part, then poetry (and literature in general) is unquestionably a medium for the experience of such a reality, and as such has powers beyond heightening and intensification. If this is not a function of poetry, if these "glimpses of the moon," these intuitions of what in highly unscientific language has been called—

> a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,

then we must be persuaded by arguments more exclusive than Mr. Eastman's book offers. His attempt to separate ideas from emotional experience and to equate the first with facts and the second with mere heightened consciousness is not convincing.

He may be right that the only knowledge which can come to us through poetry is knowledge of the uncertain, which therefore is not knowledge at all; but by his own definition this pseudo-knowledge, which is usually called wisdom, cannot come through science, and his dilemma is therefore to deny its validity utterly or to admit a value for "literary truth." And to deny is not to prove. And to deny is to counter a host of human authorities who cannot lightly be gain-

MAX EASTMAN.
DRAWN BY GUY PENE DU BOIS FOR *The Saturday Review.*

Vignette for Christmas Eve

By FLORENCE RIPLY MASTIN

NOW when the leaf is etched upon the pane
In exquisite remembrance of green days
And, pricked with frost, the shriveled apple lays
Its dark branch on the roof against the rain;
When lighted candles lift their golden peaks
Into the shadows of the ancient house
Where creeps for carnival the meadow mouse,
And in the rising wind a shutter creaks,—

It is most welcome to the traveler
In time and space, to close and bar the door,
Only to see the hearth fire shift and stir,
Only to hear the cricket in the floor,—
And honeysuckle at the window blowing
A fainter music now that it is snowing.

* In this last I go a little beyond Eastman, but it is an implication of his thesis, and a sound explanation of a familiar happening.

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said. And indeed the curiously unsatisfactory nature of all present and all possible scientific explanations, of beauty, or the beautiful experience, or of mysticism, is at least an argument that in their analyses some factor (capturable presumably only through experience) is left out of the whole.

And the critic, like the poet, is not merely a purveyor of joy. If he approaches poetry as if it were a sacred mystery out of which practical truth can be drawn, then he may speak foolishly. John Drinkwater, quoting Shelley's dictum that poets are the acknowledged legislators of the world, is not impressive in 1931. They are not. If the critic regards the poet as a wise man who possesses the secret of all human relationships, he is likely to write some very muddy psychology. If he pontificates about the higher plane upon which literature moves in an area where science has no place, he will probably miss whatever values apart from ethics that poetry actually possesses. But if he is sufficiently creative to put his imagination *en rapport* with the writer's, a process in which scientific training is of the greatest help, he can interpret for us a literary experience which may contain an apprehension of things as they are, otherwise inaccessible. Perhaps Mr. Eastman would admit this possibility in his definition of poetry. If so, he should not speak quite so contemptuously of the "uncertain" as a source of wisdom. For it all comes down to this. He makes knowledge and wisdom identical. I do not know that they are not; neither does he know that they are. I do not know what the components of wisdom are, though I can accurately gauge the components of knowledge; but there is a vast amount of the kind of statistical evidence he praises, to prove that wisdom contains elements of the uncertain and the immaterial. I refer him to his fellow men.

And even on the lower terms of verifiable fact is he prepared to admit that literature has no contribution to make to the body of knowledge where the humane sciences are at work. There is a striking difference between a personality psycho-analyzed, explained, and classified, and a personality in literature, synthesized, whole. It is not merely that it is felt there as experience. Through such an experience, just one remove from reality, we learn something about human nature which no analysis can convey. It may be "uncertain" in the technical sense, but it is invaluable. Falstaff is a contribution to knowledge, and if he is "uncertain" knowledge, nevertheless no sociological or psychological explanation can ever give us the intangible which makes the difference between his psychology and his personality. Perhaps this is quibbling with the word knowledge, for assuredly this kind of information about human nature is not what science seeks or should seek, but it is not quibbling with Mr. Eastman's argument, which very definitely separates wisdom from felt experience, and assigns all of the former to science.

The author, I think, overshoots his mark. He asserts that every experience not arising from a verifiable material world is a make-believe, an illusion, whose value lies in a pleasurable or elevating sensation of awe, mystery, rapture, or hope. But it is surely not scientific to delimit the possibilities of experience outside the realms of the measurable. Nor are the many who say that "heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter" to be lightly accused of telling fairy tales to supernaturalism. These unheard melodies are perhaps illusion, or perhaps a reverberation of ultimate reality—they tease us out of thought precisely because neither science nor Mr. Eastman can tell to which category they belong. I myself would extend his definition of literature as a heightening of consciousness, to include an apprehension of things as they are, which is perhaps illusive, but perhaps also a flash of truth communicable only through experience.

And yet, with all deductions made, this book, with Richard's "Principles of Literary Criticism," and his "Practical Criticism," strikes at the heart of much ancient fallacy, and clears away loads of learned and unlearned rubbish. Indeed the critic, who suffers such derogation in Mr. Eastman's theory, is elevated by his practice. We have had overweening humanists, we have molish literary historians lost in their delvings, we shall have psychologists and sociologists proving that they know everything but the literature they study. Such critics as Mr. Eastman are not likely to lack importance, even though they must choose a humbler task than to prove that poetry is the essence of the Encyclopedia Britannica better said than in prose. But they must not dogmatize on reality.

Annals of Statesmanship

MEMOIRS OF PRINCE VON BÜLOW. Volume II: From the Moroccan Crisis to the Resignation, 1903-1909. Boston: Little, Brown & Company. 1931. $5.

Reviewed by WILLIAM L. LANGER
Harvard University

IN this second volume of Bülow's reminiscences there is less pure gossip than in the first volume. The late German statesman, having made his prejudices and antipathies known, devotes himself more consistently to a discussion of policy during the most important period of his chancellorship. In the field of foreign affairs he has to relate and explain the Moroccan crisis, the famous Björkö Treaty with Russia, the naval side of the Anglo-German antagonism, and the well-known Bosnian Crisis of 1908-1909. In home politics the great election of 1907 and the *Daily Telegraph* affair of 1908 overshadow all other things.

Those who have read the first volume of the "Memoirs" will know what to expect of the treatment of these various problems. Bülow's account is always interesting, and often amusing. But it is also unsatisfactory, because, aside from its being an apology, it is thoroughly one-sided. In the Moroccan question the German policy aimed throughout at the safeguarding of the rights of other nations, violated by France under the demoniac leadership of Delcassé. And the German policy, according to Bülow, was a successful policy, for Delcassé was overthrown and the Algeciras Conference secured everything that could reasonably be hoped for. As for the Björkö Treaty, it was only the irresponsible bungling of the Emperor that frustrated what was a sound policy. In the matter of naval agreement with England Bülow saw clearly the absolute necessity for at least slowing up construction, but Tirpitz and the Emperor were not only blind but obdurate.

And so it goes through a long volume. Bülow is forever talking of his readiness to admit his errors, but it never comes to that. Wherever he has an opportunity he throws the responsibility on the Kaiser, on Holstein, on Tirpitz, or on minor officials, as in the *Daily Telegraph* episode. It must be admitted that William II was guilty of gross exaggerations and distortions of the facts, and that he was forever getting himself and his government into serious scrapes. On the other hand, Bülow's statesmanship was not as able or as successful as he would have us suppose. Even his victory over the Socialists in 1907 was not as unqualified as he leads the reader to believe, while much might be said on the other side of almost all the major problems which he takes up.

When all is said and done it must be remembered that the years treated in this volume saw the formation of the Anglo-French Entente and the Anglo-Russian Agreement and the steady weakening of Germany's international position. It would be childish to attribute this development solely to the shortcomings of any one person. Its roots lay deep in the European system. But Bülow must bear not a little of responsibility. He was neither able enough nor firm and constructive enough to give the course of events a definite turn, and there is little in his memoirs to shake this conclusion. They make interesting chronicle, but for the historian they are of very indifferent value. In any case, however, they call for careful and critical reading.

Literary Progress

THE NEGRO AUTHOR. His Development in America. By VERNON LOGGINS. New York: Columbia University Press. 1931. $5.

Reviewed by JAMES WELDON JOHNSON

THE so-called Negro literary renaissance is popularly supposed to be a phenomenon which suddenly manifested itself within the last decade. It is possible that most of those who think about this matter at all think of the Negro writer as a product of the recent settlement in Harlem—an unprecedented product. It is true that an almost instantaneous change has taken place within the last ten years or so; and it was brought about largely through the efforts of the Harlem group of Negro writers; but the major portion of that change has taken place in the general American public rather than in the Negro race. The significant thing that has recently happened is, a quick growth in awareness of the Negro's literary efforts on the part of America at large and in its willingness to accord them due recognition.

The literary efforts of the Negro in America extend back over many years. The first extensive survey of those efforts is made in "The Negro Author." Mr. Loggins has considered and brought to the attention of his readers the work of more than two hundred Negro authors embraced in the period between the years 1760 and 1900. This number of writers and the mass of material considered are in themselves impressive and will be, no doubt, surprising to those acquainted only with the outstanding names of the present generation. The book begins with the poetry of Jupiter Hammon and Phillis Wheatley and includes a survey and study of the subsequent writers of poetry, history, fiction, sociological and theological treatises, and the numerous slave biographies down to the end of the period embraced. There is also an important section dealing with the writings and published speeches of the leading Negro anti-slavery workers, of whom Frederick Douglass was the most able and the most famous.

Mr. Loggins is in no sense an apologist. He has done his work in a thorough and scholarly manner. He has arranged clearly a prodigious amount of research and made sound critical appraisals of the material that has passed through his hands. However, in making these appraisals, he finds several almost utterly unknown names that he deems worthy of a place in American letters.

The book is of both artistic and historical importance. Readers will find in it not only a record of the Negro's literary progress, of his struggle toward the attainment of adequate expression in poetry, fiction, history, memoir-writing and oratory, but also a key to the social development of the race. Many of the steps in that development taken by Negro leaders of the past whose names mean nothing to the general public of today stand out as examples of courage and daring. Mr. Loggins quotes from an address made by Henry Highland Garnett before a Negro anti-slavery convention at Buffalo in 1843 in which the speaker called upon his brothers in bondage to engage in an unheard of insurrection—to go on a general strike; he urged them to:

> cease to labor for tyrants who will not remunerate you. Let every slave throughout the land do this, and the days of slavery are numbered. You cannot be more oppressed than you have been—you cannot suffer greater cruelties than you have already. Rather die Freemen, than live to be Slaves. Remember that you are Three Millions.

The student will find the book of the greatest value, for not before has such a vast amount of material on the subject been brought together in orderly fashion and published. It should also be interesting to the general reader, for Mr. Loggins has absolutely avoided the dry-as-dust method so commonly used in the doing of a thesis, and has written the book in a very engaging style.

James Weldon Johnson, one of the foremost members of his race in America, is both a musical composer and an author. He has been in the United States consular service, and is now secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Among his works are "The Book of American Negro Poetry" and "The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man."

HEADS OF NEGROES, BY RUBENS (ROYAL MUSEUM, BRUSSELS).

Ridge-Runner Culture

THE OZARKS, An American Survival of Primitive Culture. By VANCE RANDOLPH. New York: The Vanguard Press. 1931. $5.

Reviewed by STANLEY VESTAL

WITHIN living memory the humanities have been extended on the scientific side to include a great and growing shoal of studies, now already classified, endowed, and provided with presses and appropriate dignified names. Two generations ago, all books on matters of an anthropological, ethnological, or sociological nature had to make their own way in the world, and as a result their authors were amateurs, enthusiasts, and their readers of the sort called general. Books and memoirs of that day were necessarily readable and often amusing.

But now that the Museum and the University Press bear the costs of printing, the humanities are fast becoming the prey of the pedant, the expert, and the graduate school; money corrupts the scholar, as it did the monk, and papers issued by our learned societies are often as barren of any human interest or value as the worst of monkish tomes. The most likely subject turns lead in the hands of such worthies, who seem to consider a well-written book a kind of profanation of their arcana.

It is, therefore, with a secret joy that one settles down for an evening with Vance Randolph's racy account of Ridge-runner culture. For on his first page he modestly disclaims any attempt at a complete survey, and freely admits that he intends to present only diverting and picturesque matters for our delight and instruction. And the pages which follow,

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comprehensive as they are, amply vindicate his preface. He writes well, easily, and vividly, from the stores of ten years' experience of these people. No one with a taste for American folk-ways, no one who likes the tang of Shakespearean English, no one who has a trace of nostalgia for that America which passed so swiftly away at the coming of the machine and the immigrant, will lay this book aside willingly, once he is fairly inside it.

For the Hill-billies of the Ozarks (that sprawling range which straddles the line between Arkansas and Missouri) have not changed much since their great-grandpappies came over from the old country to the mountains of Kentucky and Virginia. They are Kentucky mountaineers, "jest borned away from home." Mr. Randolph treats them with a sympathy and respect that amounts to championing their whole, round, tight little culture. He has evidently found it a relief to withdraw from the distracting complexity of our bastard European civilization, with its rag-bag diversities and foreign gim-cracks imported from a hundred ill-assorted sources, to this compact and finished world of the backwoodsman.

After a redundant chapter on the archæology of the region, he goes straight into the Hills with us: he takes us into the cabins, shows us a turkey-shoot, how corn-likker is made, how the old-time shootin'-iron was manufactured. We hear the hum of spinning wheels, the sing-song of ballads, and learn to understand the reasons behind the unsanitary habits of the natives. We attend religious gatherings, "camp-meetin's and sich," learn of scores of superstitions, the digging for buried treasure, and witness the curious devices of local fishermen—Jumpers, Giggers, and Noodlers, some of whom know how to make fish jump into their boats! Women and social life is discussed, and one understands how easy it was for Kit Carson and other hill-billies of old days to take an Indian woman to wife, since there was so little difference in the status of woman in the cultures of primitive Red man and primitive white. And we hear grim stories of the border struggles of the Civil War.

Most delightful of all, perhaps, are the pages on the dialect of the region, its Shakespearean survivals, and especially the amazing variety and remoteness of its euphemisms. A more squeamish people (in language) could not be found—though both men and women swear as freely as did Queen Elizabeth. This dialect will be slow in dying; one catches echoes of it all over Missouri, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and parts of Kansas, even in the speech of college students. It is a valuable asset to politicians in that region, especially in times of depression, when the Furriners (Americans of more modern type) are apt to lose ground. It is so racy, so native, that it must long outlive the culture from which it takes its name.

Not least diverting are Mr. Randolph's pages devoted to recording the opinions of Hill-billies regarding the Furriners who have made the Ozarks their summer playground, and are fast sweeping the old manners away. These comments, one finds, are apter than those of the usual visiting Britisher or Continental; fresher too. They are the comments of our contemporary ancestors. And they are not often favorable.

The *Pesti Hirlap* reports that unknown letters from Beethoven and Liszt have been found by a merchant of Dombovár called Miksa Steiner. The letters were found among the correspondence of his wife's great-grandfather, Jacob Degen, a Viennse merchant who was the then president of the Philharmonic Society.

The letter from Beethoven is dated 1819 ,and thanks Degen, as president of the Philharmonic Society, for electing the writer as a member of the society. The Liszt letter, which is written in French, is addressed to Mrs. Pleysel, a Viennese pianiste, and asks her to play his newest composition as often as possible at her concerts. As the letter is not dated, it is not known to which of his compositions Liszt was referring.

Modern Physics

THE UNIVERSE IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN PHYSICS. By MAX PLANCK. Translated from the German by W. H. JOHNSTON. New York: W. W. Norton and Co. 1931. $2.

Reviewed by LEIGH PAGE
Yale University

THROUGHOUT the nineteenth century the aim of theoretical physics was to explain new phenomena in terms of the well established concepts of dynamics. Indeed, Lord Kelvin often asserted that no phenomenon was satisfactorily accounted for until it was reduced to elements obeying the fundamental laws of mechanics. This objective, however, became more and more difficult to realize during the latter part of the century, particularly in connection with the discoveries of Ampère and Faraday which Maxwell described with so much elegance in his famous electromagnetic equations. In fact it was only by introducing the most complicated and fantastic mechanisms that any mechanical picture which accounted for even the most obvious facts could be constructed.

During the closing years of the nineteenth century, the experimenter was laying the basis for the revolution in his attitude toward nature which the theories of the twentieth century have forced upon the physicist. The attempt made by Michelson in 1881 to measure the velocity of the earth relative to the ether led to the enunciation by Einstein in 1905 of the relativity theory, and the study of heat radiation led to the proposal at about the same time of the theory of quanta by the author of this book. While the relativity theory developed rapidly and soon attained a satisfying perfection of form, the quantum theory evolved much more slowly, and has assumed the aspect of a self-contained theory only during the last three or four years. This slower development has been due, in part at least, to the fact that the quantum theory has demanded much more radical departures from classical concepts than the relativity theory. The effect of these two theories has been to give rise to a profound alteration in the attitude of the physicist toward nature. All attempts to explain newly discovered phenomena in terms of the elements of the older and therefore supposedly more fundamental branches of the science have been abandoned; instead the present aim is to select from the variety of mathematical constructs evolved by the mathematician that one which most exactly and most simply describes the phenomena revealed by experiment. Today the God of the physicist is a mathematician instead of a mechanician.

It must not be inferred, however, that the advent of these two theories and the adoption of this new point of view has necessitated the discard of the whole of classical physics. The new ideas have had their origin in the exploration of new domains of observation and experiment. Thus the relativity theory arose from investigations involving particles moving with enormous speeds relative to the observer and, in its cosmological aspects, from the study of far more distant regions of space than the nineteenth century astronomer was able to penetrate. The quantum theory, on the other hand, owes its development to the investigation of the exceedingly minute. Its basis lies in the study of the structure of atoms and molecules as revealed mainly by their optical and X-ray spectra. Both theories reduce to the classical theories of dynamics and electrodynamics in the domain which was accessible to the experimenter of the previous century. Newton's law of gravitation is still quite competent to explain in their broad outlines the motions of the planets; Maxwell's equations will undoubtedly satisfy for many years to come the requirements of the electrical or radio engineer.

As Professor Planck points out in this book, theoretical physics is engaged today in revealing the real world which lies beyond the world of sense. As the relativity theory has reached a state of formal perfection in most of its aspects it does not require the detailed examination demanded by the puzzling questions in the domain of the quantum theory which still lack a satisfactory solution. Consequently the author devotes his attention almost exclusively to the latter theory. The most radical concept of this theory is the Heisenberg indetermination principle, which denies the possibility of an exact specification of both the position and momentum of an electron. Although this principle has been accepted by many as involving the overthrow of the law of causality, Professor Planck seems disinclined to accept this extreme view. He feels that statistical laws are fundamentally unsatisfactory for the reason that they have no absolute validity but always admit of exceptions.

In his last chapter, the author discusses the conflict between classical and quantum concepts of the nature of radiation. It is as if each theory had its own preserve and was incompetent to deal with facts in the domain of the other. Thus classical wave theory gives a perfect picture of the phenomena of interference but is quite incapable of coping with photoelectric effect; with the quantum theory exactly the reverse is true. Apparently Professor Planck is unable to stomach Dirac's quantum explanation of interference, in which the same photon is assumed to be partly in one and partly in the other of two rays which are later to be brought together to form an interference pattern. Only when the investigator attempts to locate it does the photon appear wholly in the one or the other ray, but then the manner of its detection has destroyed the possibility of interference.

The book is written in a vivid style and should appeal to all who are interested in the trends of modern physics, whether they have been specially trained in the subject or not.

Still Standing

(*Continued from page* 405)

lenge attention. It deserves it. The question is largely a matter of words, but this is a case in which words are things. On the last 22d of February, Nicholas Murray Butler declared that Washington was founder of our "democracy," and he stoutly defended the term. The fact is that our terminology in matters of government is an utter chaos. Washington was radically opposed to democracy in any exact sense of the word, and he was equally opposed to it when, under impact of the French Revolution, it began to call itself "republican." He was no less opposed to anything deserving the name of aristocracy. Long before the Convention of 1787, he declared that the constituent authority resided in the people, and he frequently pointed out that under the Constitution government is periodically subject to the popular will. The instant judgment of the masses of mankind he distrusted, but in their ultimate wisdom he had deep faith. Time and again he wrote, and underscored, that "the people must *feel* before they can *see*"; but he never failed to add that "the people will be right in the end." The Constitution over the formation of which he presided and to which he affixed his signature intended what was called a *republic*, namely, a "mixed government" in which the "principles" of "democracy" and "aristocracy" were "balanced" against each other under the ægis of a "monarchic" President. In the ordinary course of affairs, government was to be in the hands of the ability and character of the nation; but it was to be subjected periodically to popular approval or disapproval. Washington was not a democratic republican nor yet a republican aristocrat; he was a simon-pure republican.

No better definition of the simon-pure republican is needed than Fay's own account of Washington's conduct. In spite of repeated declarations that he was personally "an aristocrat" and "a dictator" in war and peace, his little book shows beyond question that he was neither. Even when Congress clothed him with dictatorial powers, he was so loath to use them, fearing to alienate the people, that Congress itself rebuked him. He was the unlettered son of an unlettered mother, whose father died early, leaving him in straitened circumstances; and, though his elder half-brother introduced him to the Virginia aristocracy and gave him his financial start, it was solely due to his own ability and his respect for popular instinct that he rose to authority. He "talked with everybody, whether rich or poor"; he could "divine infallibly the slightest nuances of public opinion"; he was a successful leader of men "not because he had a bold and original mind, not because he was eloquent, not because of his ideas, not because he was capable of making plans on a large scale, but because he carried in himself the tendencies of his own environment and transmitted them into acts more quickly and more energetically than the others." It need scarcely be said that neither he nor anyone in the group that gave us the Constitution practised the art of glad-handing and of flattering the masses with the equalitarian dogma; but it is important to know that his leadership was not aristocratic but republican—as firmly founded upon a popular instinct that sprang from love of his fellow men as it was clear-sighted, independent, and inflexible.

Disentangled from dubious or misleading words, Fay's portrait is that of the man in his habit as he lived, a rebuke alike to the idolators and the debunkers.

> American school children . . . are told that he was a great Soldier, a great President, a great Sage. They are told that he was good, generous, untiring, disinterested, sublime. And no doubt it is right they should be told all this. But the children are not told that . . . by his love of the land he directed the United States to the West; that he . . . had given them a strong central government in order to destroy their tendency to quarrel among themselves; and that he instructed them to love this country above everything else. The children are not told that he was the first great modern politician who had a perfect instinct for public opinion. . . .

John Corbin, who has been at various times an editor, and dramatic critic, is also a novelist and historian. His most recent book, "The Unknown Washington," met with high commendation when it appeared last year.

A Balanced Ration for a Week's Reading

LIFE AND LETTERS OF WOODROW WILSON. By RAY STANNARD BAKER. *Doubleday, Doran.*

The third and fourth volumes in what is up to the present the most extensive and authoritative biography of President Wilson.

NEW ROADS TO PROSPERITY. By PAUL MAZUR. *Viking.*

A discussion of the capitalistic system with some suggestions for its improvement by a New York banker.

THE FLOWER OF LIFE. By THOMAS BURKE. *Little, Brown.*

The brief but touching story of an aged woman who wrested happiness from misery and faced down the disaster of life.

The Saturday Review of LITERATURE

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Published weekly by the Saturday Review Co., Inc., Henry Seidel Canby, President; Roy E. Larsen, Vice-President; Noble A. Cathcart, Secretary-Treasurer, 25 West 45th Street, New York. Subscription rates per year, postpaid, in the U. S. and Mexico, $3.50; in Canada, $5; in Great Britain, 18 shillings; elsewhere $4.50. All business communications should be addressed to 25 West 45th Street, New York. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 1, 1879. Vol. 8. No. 23.

The Saturday Review is indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature."

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Farewell of an Era

MAN'S OWN SHOW: CIVILIZATION. By GEORGE A. DORSEY. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1931. $5.

Reviewed by GEOFFREY PARSONS

THIS last testament of Professor Dorsey—he died an hour after correcting the final proofs—might serve also as the long farewell of an era. In detail, for its wealth of accurate anthropological knowledge and for its embattled language, it is well worth reading in if not reading through. If the style halts and skips like a radio announcer at a prizefight, the ideas arrive sharply and clearly. But as a whole, for its interpretation of history and for its resultant advice to humanity, it is naively illogical. Angrily, bitterly, scornfully, Professor Dorsey attacks all the past of instinct and intuition by which man has chiefly progressed and to which Dr. Dorsey exhibits him as desperately, pathetically attached. Throughout this attack Dr. Dorsey displays an intensity of prejudice which few fundamentalists could match. So far so good. An agnostic is as much entitled to irrational antipathies as a Bishop Cannon. But then, in the same emotional breath Dr. Dorsey proceeds to hymn science, the calm, rational approach to life, and predicts its triumph. It is the one hope of the world, he declares. Perhaps he is right. But the reader cannot forget the object lesson of the author's wrath or escape the self-destruction implicit in his argument. If the first nine-tenths of his exposition is correct, then the last tenth, of hope and light, is as impracticable as a squared circle. If man is the slave of instinct and emotion and these springs of action are hopelessly in charge, what possible chance has reason to prevail? Dr. Dorsey never explains. It never, apparently, occurred to him that his whole book was a dramatic demonstration of the truth that in whatever progress man ever has achieved or ever will achieve reason can play only a pathetically minor rôle.

The question that puts itself at once is why so well equipped an anthropologist should so completely lose his scientific point of view. The answer involves the whole modern problem of popularized science. The effort has been twofold. The concepts and methods of science have been stretched to include fields of knowledge where only the first experimental endeavors toward accurate observation are feasible and not even the first adumbrations of scientific generalization are discernible. Since these fields, which include sociology, economics, psychology, and anthropology, bear the most direct relation to the practical problems of life, they have inevitably been the most visited by the popularizing brotherhood. The other half of the question raises the whole problem of democratic knowledge. Every American is reared in the belief that everything in the long run can and should be shared. The dissemination of all science and all learning waits only upon a sufficient economic foundation to support the halls of education and organize enough correspondence universities. Such has been the classic formula of our share of the western hemisphere. We are speaking here not of the unauthentic wisdom of the newer sciences, but of the best generalizations, of the older sciences. Can they be democratized, like symphony concerts and swimming pools?

I am reminded of the fashion in which a friend and a distinguished scientist used to reply when I would prod him for wisdom about such over-simplified but very human problems as "the inheritance of acquired characteristics" or the dramatic issue not answered in Genesis, of whether vegetable or animal life first appeared upon the earth. He would say in effect:

> I'll be glad to give you my speculations and my hunches. But I wouldn't dare print them for general consumption. I couldn't make the casual reader understand how altogether tentative such preliminary guesses are. The mind of every scientist worth his salt is full of such imaginings. For the real scientist imagination is just as essential as for the real poet. But he knows himself how to discriminate sharply between the various shades of knowledge. He dares not run the risk of confusing the inexpert mind by sharing these hypotheses with him.

Is science by its nature a perquisite of aristocracy—of intellectual aristocracy, that is? Can it never be shared with the general public? Is education a hopeless stern chase wherein the plodding multitudes painfully toiling upward can never approach, much less overtake, the swiftly advancing van of science? Seated before this hodge-podge of fact, hypothesis, and wild surmise, assembled by this able anthropologist in a sincere effort to light the steps of the multitude, it is difficult not to be appalled and depressed and driven toward the aristocratic theory.

One's mind reverts to those true scientists in the fields of chemistry, biology, mathematics, who could not conceivably be diverted from their pursuit of truth by any popular applause or personal prejudice. Popularizers can surely do no damage to the progress of science in these fields and popular misinformation must surely be ultimately corrected. Unfortunately these sciences happen to impinge upon man's way of living in a different direction, not his practical activities in society or business, but his emotional approach to the universe, to wit, religion. The temptation to an Einstein or a Millikan to imagine that his mathematics or his physics has some vital bearing upon religious faith is almost irresistible. Doubtless none of these practitioners of the older and firmer sciences are deflected in their scientific researches by such speculations, but their influence upon the popular mind is probably wholly bad. Given the American fondness for believing that once an expert always an expert and that a physicist must necessarily be a philosopher, such wanderings of the great must necessarily be befuddling to the mind of the general reader.

These distortions, perversions, and exaggerations of the scientific mind are constantly leading Dr. Dorsey astray. The earlier part of the book is the best—Chapter VI on the First Million Years, for example. Once religion appears upon the scene the author is lost. There is something positively sadistic in his assault upon Christianity. He can see no good in its creeds or its heroes. Written in the days of Dr. Ingersoll these attacks would have been effective polemic and vituperation. Today they are as boring as they are irrelevant. The intelligent man of today is not wasting his time bashing in the heads of discarded idols; rather is he wondering how he can find new sources of great emotions with which to replace them. In architecture, in poetry, in music? Just how completely blind Dr. Dorsey was to every mystical aspect of man's created beauty can be inferred from one small judgment uttered in a long scornful passage on the Bible. The sentence begins with these tell-tale words:

"The King James version is bad not only because it is in old-fashioned, antiquated English . . ." Well, a more antiquated English and an ear for rhythm and a realization that ideas worth having cannot be captured by jabbing at them with a succession of disconnected phrases, would have helped Dr. Dorsey's volume immensely. But then, so equipped, he would never have written this book exhibiting perhaps more perfectly than was ever before exhibited, reason in all its nakedness.

"Hall Caine's overwhelming popularity," says a writer in the London *Observer*, "is not to be explained away by his limitations. He had two qualities which many more finished writers have lacked. One was his intense earnestness. His humanitarianism and religiosity were not assumed for effect. They were, I am convinced, perfectly genuine in their rather quaint simplicity. Caine really did believe that there was a divine ordering of the universe which caused virtue to triumph, after long trial and tribulation, and wickedness to be brought to naught. He was a humane man who sympathized with the under-dog, pitied the poor and the downtrodden, hated cruelty and oppression. For those who traded upon the emotional weakness of women he could find no mercy.

Ineffective Biography

SIR WALTER RALEIGH, That Damned Upstart. By DONALD BARR CHIDSEY. New York: The John Day Company. 1931. $3.75.

THE RECKLESS DUKE. By PHILIP GIBBS. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1931. $4.

Reviewed by CHARLES DAVID ABBOTT
University of Colorado

IT was inevitable, with the present passion for spirited biography, that two such adventurous and glamorous figures as Sir Walter Raleigh and George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham, should appear in the publishers' lists. They seem to offer, each in his different way, unusual opportunities to the modern interpreter. They were the friends or enemies of men whose very names evoke heroic thoughts, and they themselves were not the smallest stars in the firmament of their times. Their careers are instinct with melodrama, even with high tragedy (if properly handled), and behind them is all the pageantry of England's most decorative and romantic

SIR WALTER RALEIGH

age. Yet, with all these presumably certain qualifications, they have not served their most recent biographers very handsomely. Perhaps it is true that the more illustrious, the more commanding the subject, the more difficult becomes the biographer's task. Mr. Strachey can be compelling even with Elizabeth and Mr. Guedalla can quicken the Iron Duke, but the disciples only refurbish where they might revivify. This mere renovation is not so disappointing when the figure thus produced is some minor personage about whom in our ignorance we are pleased to be informed; but when the subject is a man already to some extent familiar, we feel entitled to ask for more than a new recital, in whatever manner it may be conducted, of the well-known facts which we can garner at need from the "Dictionary of National Biography" with much less expense of spirit. These two books both fail, in spite of their authors' best intentions, to awaken the requisite interest because in neither is the central character firmly and convincingly imagined. And without this vital and original reconstruction books of this kind become drab and dull.

Mr. Chidsey relies, with misguided faith, upon the attractions of his style to compensate for the essential lifelessness of his hero. By abruptness, by poetic inversions of word order, by an affected intimacy gained largely from the lavish use of pet names (often highly rhetorical), he conducts Sir Walter through his dangerous courses. "Never a shout went up when the Devonshire upstart reëntered London." "Raleigh, furious, grabbed his pen." Thus the great Elizabethan moves through Mr. Chidsey's pages, and if he possessed, as it is only reasonable to suppose the author of those moving paragraphs at the end of his "History of the World" did possess, any dignity in real life, he has certainly lost it here. At the most intense moments, short sharp sentences are detailed to carry the whole burden of the drama. The principle behind this technique is perhaps sound, but the effect, thanks to a kind of belligerent smartness, is often that of dud firecrackers.

Sir Philip Gibbs is not guilty of Mr. Chidsey's methods. He is much more solemn and reserved, but his work does not inspire confidence. It is a little disconcerting to find that the frontispiece of a book on George Villiers is a portrait not of that worthy but of John Sheffield, the first Duke of Buckingham of a later creation and a most august gentleman who lived to be one of Queen Anne's ministers. His costume ought to have been sufficient to suggest a date somewhat too late for George Villiers, even if the portrait were not carefully marked "John" by the original engraver. But this is possibly not Sir Philip's mistake; the publishers might be willing to assume the responsibility. Still, there are other statements that raise doubts. We are told that Drayton, whose dramatic ventures were hardly felicitous or extraordinary (so far as we know), had, along with Marlowe and Shakespeare, "given a golden age to English drama." These are, in a sense, trivial matters, but they give us pause. And when we find that the wealth of detail, some of it doubtfully exact and some of it very badly digested, does not succeed in making the reckless duke any more clearly comprehensible than he was before, we begin to wonder why so brilliant a journalist should turn biographer.

Interesting Yesterdays

STEPPING WESTWARD. By LAURA E. RICHARDS. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1931. $3.

Reviewed by ARTHUR COLTON

IT is found by experiment that Wordsworthians are little more than occasional. To the multitude of the non-elect it may be explained that "Stepping Westward" in the Wordsworthian sense is a kind of heavenly destiny. The echo of a voice enwrought of human sweetness accompanies those to whom that destiny is granted and by virtue of its courteous salutation they are possessed of a spiritual right to travel through bright regions to a glowing sunset. The voice is soft, the accents native to a locality, and the salutation has boundlessness and power. "We have been young and have seen visions," Mrs. Richards writes at the end of her recollections; "we are old and have dreamed dreams; and the best of the dreams have come true." That is a simpler if a less subtle and searching way of saying the same thing. Mrs. Richards is not a mystic, and her rendering at least brings the thing closer to common experience.

Destiny has many ingredients. It is advisable to have parents of distinction as well as of character; and to be born in Boston into the society of the first, and so far the only very definite, school of American literature, was not unwise. Mrs. Richards's mother wrote the Battle Hymn of the Republic. Her father, Samuel Gridley Howe, began his career in the Greek Revolution of 1830, and came home to found the first Institute for the Blind and be a driving force behind most of the charitable institutions of Massachusetts. She was first taken abroad at seventeen and introduced to various inner circles of society, English and Continental, while her father attended to a promising revolution in Crete. She went again on a bridal tour in company with the pursuit of architecture. After some years in Boston she found herself settled in Gardiner, Maine. She had six children, celebrated a sixtieth wedding anniversary, and wrote sixty books of prose and verse. Most of them were children's books, of which some are still popular, but the list includes substantial biographies of Samuel Gridley Howe, Julia Ward Howe, Laura Bridgeman, after whom she was named, Abigail Adams, Elizabeth Fry, and Florence Nightingale. My first acquaintance with her name was from the *St. Nicholas* magazine and hearing the children singing "Little John Bottle John." Her recollections, with their family supplements, cover a rounded century, historically trophied by a Greek blunderbuss and Byron's helmet at one end, at the other by a helmet, gas mask, and Croix de Guerre from the World War; and the Civil War Battle Hymn in the middle.

Length of days and large experience

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help to make the satisfactory life, but they do not of themselves give the spiritual right. The heavenly destiny, the gift of turning visions into realities, is personal and inherent. The culture which came to Mrs. Richards by inheritance, the insatiable love of books, the tradition of service, the standards of thought and conduct which belong and give grace to the best of New England, she has maintained and passed on. After many stories she has written her life with the easy skill that makes it read like a story. It is in such lives that our essential civilization and its hopes consist.

Historical Tales

THE VIRTUOUS KNIGHT. By ROBERT EMMET SHERWOOD. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1931. $2.50.

THE FLAME ON ETHIRDOVA. By HECTOR BOLITHO. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1931. $2.

Reviewed by GARRETT MATTINGLY

IN "The Virtuous Knight" Mr. Sherwood attempts to apply the formula of "The Road to Rome" to a story about the Third Crusade and succeeds in demonstrating how much easier it is to write a satisfactory historical play than an equally satisfactory historical novel. Not that there was so much history about the "Road to Rome," but for two hours on the stage it was amusing to hear Carthaginian mercenaries talk like characters in "What Price Glory?" and to be shown that senators are senators whether they wear frock coats or togas. Stripped of the glamor of the stage and reduced to cold print, similar demonstrations about the contemporaries of Richard Cœur de Lion merely leave the reader skeptical of what seems to be too facile a substitute for genuine historical imagination.

A novelist cannot rely on the physical presence of his actors to carry conviction. Also a novelist has to go into details that a playwright can leave to the imagination of his audience or the ingenuity of his director and in going into details a novelist gets into trouble. Mr. Sherwood has undoubtedly read the latest books on the Third Crusade—to prove it he puts the interpretations of twentieth century historians into the mouths of his twelfth century characters—but he is not at home in his period. Such quaint notions as that a squire of the body was not a fighting man, that Omar Khayyam wrote in Arabic, that the organization of infantry in the twelfth century was analogous to that of modern armies betray his lack of ease no less certainly than his tendency to borrow his *decors,* Western or Oriental, from Hollywood. But slips like these do not matter to the essence of his story. What does matter is revealed in his cavalier assumption that a Norman-English noble reared in the reign of Henry II would be repelled by the west front of Chartres because its sculptors lacked the "skill," the sense of "grace and form" which at once attracted him in the fragment of a classical torso—in other words that the average Norman's view of life in the twelfth century was no different from that of the average American in the twentieth.

Mr. Sherwood tries to tell how a naive young crusader is lead by his experiences in Syria and his contact with the older and wiser civilization of the East to abandon the faith of his fathers and take refuge in scepticism. Perhaps such things happened, and the idea is not without interest. But to write movingly of such a loss of faith, one must have some imaginative insight into an age when faith was the mainspring of society, one must have some sympathy with characters to whom faith was real. To Mr. Sherwood, medieval Christianity is only a sorry and debasing superstition; the whole chivalric way of life is merely ridiculous. Starting from such a premise his story is bound to ring false.

An artist who wishes to create a convincing picture of a distant time and place must have the fullest imaginative sympathy with its peculiar way of looking at the world. It is just his grasp of this fundamental necessity that makes Mr. Hector Bolitho's "The Flame on Ethirdova" ring true. The monastery on Ethirdova was founded in a time that can only be denoted as "The Middle Ages"—it couldn't actually have been at any historical time in them or at any particular place—and no glamor from the pages of children's histories is borrowed to cover it. The legend of its patron saint, its founder, and its subsequent destruction is told simply, almost baldly, without apology or sophistication. The characters are lightly but firmly sketched, there is little attempt at pictorial local color, there can hardly be said to be a plot. If there is any allegory it is obscure. Miracles are recorded as calmly and with as little explanation as they would be by St. Gregory, and the moral judgments set down are, most of them, those of a thirteenth century monk. The prose is fragile, almost finical. But the imaginative sympathy of the writer with the subject is so complete that his book is preserved from any taint of *pastiche*. So the world seemed, one says to oneself, when it was younger. So men saw and felt and reasoned in the age of faith. And in return for the loving comprehension he has given it, that age has thrown its austere and peaceful beauty over Mr. Bolitho's pages. In them we may find again for a moment something we once valued but have long since lost.

The World in a Nutshell

AN OUTLINE OF THE UNIVERSE. By J. G. CROWTHER. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company. 1931. $3.50.

Reviewed by JOHN H. BRADLEY, JR.

IN a prefatory note the author states his belief that scientific journalism is a new craft "at present practised mainly by scientists wishing to increase their pocket money or too elderly to have sufficient energy for research." On the next page he acknowledges the books of A. S. Eddington, J. B. S. Haldane, A. V. Hill, J. S. Huxley, J. H. Jeans, T. H. Morgan, C. K. Ogden, H. N. Russell, G. E. Smith, G. P. Wells, H. G. Wells, and others. Since this list includes some of the chief practitioners of scientific journalism who are also professional scientists, it would be interesting to know which ones Mr. Crowther thinks are writing for pin money and which ones are too old to do research.

The myth that scientists are congenitally unable to express themselves in the mother tongue persists in the face of repeated proof to the contrary. Mr. Crowther believes that when scientists write about science "their work usually suffers in the first instance from defects in style due to the character of their motive and in the second from the mental deconcentration which affects those within sight of the grave." He attempts to correct these deficiencies, to write a book on the universe that will convey not only the facts but the mental attitude of the men who discover them, a book neither motivated by hope of gain nor vitiated by old age.

After such a smug announcement the reader naturally looks for faults—and finds them. "Accuracy of atmosphere" is extolled as the chief desideratum for books of this genre, but in several places Mr. Crowther's book contains positive statements which are sometimes misleading, occasionally false, and always out of harmony with the skeptical tone of the truly scientific utterance. In chapter 9, for example, the theoretical concepts in the "Jeans theory" of the origin of the solar system are stated with irritating dogmatism. Furthermore, tidal disruption of the sun by a passing star is the cornerstone of the theory. It was taken bodily from the planetesimal hypothesis of Chamberlin and Moulton, yet the mother hypothesis is not mentioned in this connection, nor fully credited at any other point in the discussion.

Again, in chapter 12, there is a badly confused account of the density sequence in the earth, coupled with the statement that "material coming up from the depths in volcanic eruptions is always basalt." If this were true, half the fun of being a petrographer would disappear. Perhaps no man can be intimate with all the material that must be reviewed and condensed for a book of this sort. Other errors of fact could be cited, but it would be unfair to emphasize them when so much of the book is ably and accurately written.

Mr. Crowther expresses the need for an impersonal scientific journalism, but if there is a reader ingenuous enough to hope for an impersonal account of anything, he is headed for disappointment here. The author admits in the preface that "this book contains an outline of what the word [universe] means to me." Judging by the allotment of space—eleven chapters to astronomy, one to geology, thirteen to physics and chemistry, twenty-nine to the properties of living matter—the universe would seem to mean for this author what it has always meant for most men: a vast background for the antics of protoplasm, chiefly the human variety. If a truly impersonal book is ever written it will probably employ symbols rather than words; it will deal little with the rare accident of life; it will contain no assumptions and no conclusions; it will be so dull to the egocentric minds of men that few if any will care to read it.

This book is enjoyable chiefly because it is not impersonal. Mr. Crowther has selected those facts and theories that appeal to his imagination, and has made of them a universe—his universe. He has presented not only an exposition of some of the most challenging concepts of ultra-modern scientific thought, but an intelligent coördination of the concepts. He has thought about his universe, and his thought is stimulating and enlightening. It is unfortunate that complacency mars this otherwise excellent outline.

*A Small Reservation**

By ELINOR WYLIE

Being a letter from the young Brots traveler, Peregrine Miles, to his father, Thomas Oliver Miles, the historian.

American Agency,
Pontefract, Conn.
7th September, 2228.

Dear Father:

You will see by the heading of this letter that I've broken my flight in Leninia. After the magnificence of the Argentine and the enchanting tranquility of China it's a depressing change, but Li Quong inveigled me into a California week-end, and I decided to cross the continent rather than the isthmus on my way home. So, instead of a Panama helmet, you shall have a slight record of a vanishing race for your notebook.

I am staying with my friend Igor Nicolai Alexandrov, the head of the American Agency here. He is an amusing, kind-hearted creature, and has urged me to remain until I am bored, which is pretty sure to happen at the end of a week of this. But as you stuffed me with sociology at an age when most children are content with sacchaplums and glucose toffee, I have a certain curiosity to see what these people are really like.

This is sometimes known as the Northern Agency, to distinguish it from the Virginian one; there is a third near Lake Michigan, but that is really a penal colony. Kolya is amazingly good to these poor devils, and their condition is comfortable and even prosperous in a material sense, though of course the whole scene is frantically depressing. It's a rotten dull job for him, and I don't see how he stands it. He has a lot of idealistic notions about educating them and so forth, and at present he intends to devote his life to this excellent work, a project of which Ranya by no means approves. By the way, she'll be in London next Friday to buy gloves, and I've told her to look you up and make you give her some tea. Tell Mother not to be shocked by her little opium pipe; it's much better than a Russian cigarette.

They have quite a decent house here, and the country is very pretty, but the whole atmosphere of the place is one of ruin and decay; I can't describe it, but it's in the air, like the smell of burning leaves. The Americans—they are mostly of the New England tribes—are rather a handsome race, and some of the girls quite lovely, but they seem to have lost all interest in life. The women look very picturesque in their native costumes; they still wear skirts, you know, and a few of them have long hair, which seems very odd indeed, and reminds one of Bluebeard's wives and Lady Godiva. They are most of them fair—a few brown or hazel eyes—but the complexion is usually freckled or rosy, and the hair somewhere between flaxen and chestnut. I have been amusing myself by tracing distinct types of Brots and Scirish faces among them, which is interesting after six hundred years. They still use the old terms; English, Pict, Scots, and Eirish, and all that sort of romantic phraseology; its very strange to hear it nowadays.

I find it perfectly easy to understand them, and their alphabet is precisely the same as ours. A lot of them still write in longhand, which went out with the longbow in Europe, didn't it? Of course Russian is compulsory at the Agency school, but Kolya finds it impossible to make them speak it among themselves, and as he is extremely broadminded they are allowed to stick to their old-fashioned Brots dialect. They may build their own houses of what material they choose, and Kolya says they are extraordinarily stubborn about using antiquated brick and wood instead of the aerated cement that is so much cleaner and cheaper. The old men even insist upon wearing woolen coats—filthy idea—and this in spite of the fact that the Soviet provides them with splendid paper and cellucotton jerkins.

It's these old men who make the most painful impression on me, somehow; the young people get a certain amount of fun out of their little tinpot Ford planes, rattling under the clouds to a cinema in the county town of Boston, and after all they can emigrate to Morocco or Paraguay, where they've established colonies. But the old men are rather tragic. Their wives—they still call them wives, in spite of Kolya's best efforts—have their sons and daughters to bring up, and their queer native messes to cook, and all that, and the middle-aged men are kept fairly busy over the maize and tobacco crops and the cider-making. The old men sit in a row, these fine autumn evenings, in front of the Agency "Store" as it is called, smoking or chewing tobacco, which is almost the only narcotic they use. I've talked with several of them, and I suppose our conversations may have a certain historical value, even though they can have no human interest except for a philanthropist such as you. The most intelligent of the lot—an old chap called Emerson Pierce—has favored me with a few acid remarks upon life in general, and the condition of the American native in particular, but their commonest monosyllable is a grunt, and when one of them says "mebbe" (maybe) he feels he is dangerously committed.

Emerson and his cousin, Seward Curtis, can both remember the days of the great massacres; in fact Sew lost a leg in the last of the fighting, though he was only fourteen at the time. They admit now that they were extremely foolish and wrongheaded, or at least one supposes they admit it by the philosophic tone of their grunts. Another old fellow called Lincoln Brown—named after their great Consul Lincoln, you know—who is a comparative chatterbox, tells me that I would have done far better to go to the Virginian Agency, where there is very good talk, as well as excellent spirits distilled from maize and rye. "Always wished I'd gone to Paris, myself, instead of being herded in here like so many head of cattle." This is Lincoln's view of the situation. He calls the neighboring

* The following, recently found among the papers of the late Elinor Wylie and written in her most Butlerian vein, looks forward to the time when all America may be embraced in a larger scheme of things and the New Englander as much a Vanishing Race as the noble Redskin.

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state the Commonwoe of Massachusetts, and indeed it is a melancholy landscape enough, with the crumbling ruins of boot factories facing the cold blue of the Atlantic. This is a milder country, the rolling hills now very beautiful in their first gilding of frost. Pontefract is upon the borders of the two states, near the town of Puttenham, named I think for one of the generals of the American Civil War. I am told that the winter climate is severe, but certainly its September is a pleasant season, and smells and tastes like a good apple.

I hesitate to ask any of these strange creatures to confess the true inwardness of his thoughts, but surely there must be a dreadful sense of exile and defeat at the back of their silence. It is a spiritual exile, of course, for these are the very fields and villages where they were born, but how little they dreamed, as children, that time would dispossess them as it has done! Do not think me sentimental if I admit that I am sorry for them. They are a vanishing race, and I suppose they are an inferior race; certainly they seem very dull and taciturn compared to Kolya and his clever friends. Perhaps all conquered peoples sink into this sombre lethargy. I remembered noticing the same look on certain faces the first time I flew across Siberia.

Lincoln, who rather fancies himself in your line, has a lot of theories about history and fate, and poetic justice, and divine irony, and the swing of the cosmic pendulum. He says that his ancestors were Trancendentalists and Abolitionists, and that such a fact explains the Soviet Government to his entire satisfaction. He is tremendously up on the whole story; the Klan and Gunmen wars, the Legion ructions, and that amazing business of the Little Theatres League and the smuggled nitroglycerine capsules. He ragged me a bit about Brotland and Japan, and asked me if we weren't rather sorry now that we'd let Russia quietly annex the whole of North America while we were translating the Anthology into Hokku form. I daresay we are, but as a Brot I wouldn't admit it.

If it is true, as Kolya tells me, that there are now about half a million native Americans surviving in the three great reservations, with perhaps another half million scattered about at various agencies throughout the south and west and on the Atlantic coast, then their race is reduced to no more than a hundredth part of its original greatness, and those survivors are, in their present state, a subject people and hardly better than slaves. But no; that is not wholly true, because of those many million only a minority was of the original stock, and of that minority many have escaped to the South American colonies and even to the countries of Europe. Those that remain are sprung from obstinate and stupid fathers who prolonged a bloody conflict without hope of victory, and their deplorable condition is but the result of their own ignorance and folly. Yet, as I said before, I am sorry for them. At the same time Kolya is a delightful fellow, and they are most fortunate in being under his care instead of at the mercy of the common run of government official.

Lincoln tells me to read the history of the Indian wars; he doesn't mean the Mutiny, you know, but the scraps with the Sioux and the Comanches in America. I must stop calling it America, or Kolya will be very cross; Leninia, I mean. But then it's been Leninia less than a hundred years, and the other has the grace of a legend already. "Old, unhappy, far-off things"; sitting in a row in front of the Agency Store, while Kolya plays brilliantly upon the balalaika.

I hope I haven't bored you; I'm not often so serious. I suppose I'll be home by the end of next week; I shall hop off early and do it in a day, so tell mother I'll be frightfully hungry. I've promised to take rather a pretty girl to a flick in Boston; Loël, her name is, and she says she's descended from a family of troubadours.

Love and Luck,

PEREGRINE.

The BOWLING GREEN

The Silver Season

LORD, I do discover a Fallacy, whereby I have long deceived myself. Which is this: I have desired to begin my Amendment, from my Birthday, or from the first day of the Yeer, or from some Eminent Festivall, that so my Repentance might bear some remarkable date. But when those dayes were come, I have adjourned my Amendment to some other Time. I am resolved thus to befool myself no longer. Today is the Golden Opportunity, tomorrow will be the Silver Season, next day, but the Brazen one, and so long, till at last I shall come to the *Toes* of *Clay*, and be turned to dust. And if this day be obscure in the Kallender, and remarkable in itself for nothing else, give me to make it memorable in my soul.—Thomas Fuller, *Good Thoughts in Bad Times* (1645)

THE CAR "TRIVIA"

Aboard *The Wolverine*, Dec 12

SIR.—Do you remember the chair-car *Trivia* that used to make sporadic appearances in the Green during the old *Post* days? She is at this moment slipping along as 5th car in the procession of Pullmans in which I am returning East from a week's work in Grand Rapids—where, incidentally, they sell the *Sat. Review*.

I used to see *Trivia* once in a while back in those old days when she was on the Springfield, Mass.-New York run. Then she was very ordinary in green plush. Now she is discreet in a sort of blue-grey. The only occupants of that elegance as I came through on my way to the diner were her porter—round, like an overgrown huckleberry—and the Pullman conductor. I made tactful inquiries of them and learned that she is on the Detroit-Buffalo (or maybe Chicago-Buffalo) run; has been, off and on, for a year or so. It occurs to me that we should organize a guild of Pearsall Smith admirers to provide her with copies of her namesake book, delicately chained to every chair.

Some time I will tell you about the young lady who teaches ballet to fat women so she can get back to live and dance in Paris. Likewise about the young gal whom I found on the road to Worse Than Death as a reader of Richard Halliburton. I put her straight by buying the town's one copy of *A Shropshire Lad* and left the rest to God. B. L.

For the year 1932 the Bowling Green plans a long—and perhaps occasionally disconcerting—feature which will not be in the least literary. Therefore I want to clear the decks by unloading today a number of literary items that have been collecting in my mind.

Ed. H. was a trainman out of work, about 60, riding the P. R. R. from Philly to N. Y. He had come from Mauch Chunk, but smelled very strong of disinfectant after a night en route in the Lodging for Friendless Men at 18th and Hamilton Streets, Philadelphia. He smokes Granger, but was out of it and borrowed a pipeful of Serene. He had a letter of commendation from a former Governor of New Jersey; he had once worked in Hoboken and was surprised to find my knowledge of that town fairly complete. He said he was an old printer, and when he alluded to the composing-room legend about type-lice I felt it was worth a dollar. He was on his way to a flop-house run by a pal of his on the East Side. More than anything he was upset by the fact he had lost his spectacles and couldn't read properly. "I'm careful about reading," he said. "I know where to stop, I always stop at a period."

The Spanish for talking pictures, I gather from a movie house on upper Fifth Avenue, is *Sonorous Pellicules*.

On Upper Broadway the lights are too bright for Orion to be seen; but by going over to Amsterdam Avenue you can see it perfectly.

Certainly one of the most interesting bookshops in New York is that of B. Westermann on West 46th Street. What is too rare among booksellers it assumes intelligence among its clients.

JOHN F. CROTTY
VETERAN BOOKSELLER IN LANSING, MICHIGAN.
(*See page* 416.)

It is extraordinary, I reflected, reaching p. 264 of *The Sacred Fount* after three weeks of patient persecution, that a man who could write as well as Henry James should so rarely have wished to do so.

"I should like to see him get the full measure of recognition that is due him while he is here and can enjoy it," writes one poet of another. "He'll get it anyhow, but I don't want him to have to wait until he is dead to garner it in. I don't think things can mean quite the same to you after you are dead."

O. H. P. remembers having watched with amusement a gentleman at a Bleecker Street tavern, years ago, who was exhilarated with the grape and insistently sociable with all and sundry. Finally he had to be quelled, but when led back to his seat he rose from it for one final gust of self-expression. Seizing a moment's hush he struck an attitude with hand on breast and cried out the phrase that the spectators have never forgotten and attribute to some obscure classic:

"Oh Virtue, when expelled from other habitations make this thy domicile."

Thereafter he sank into silence and History has nought else to report.

Vachel Lindsay believed in poetry as something actual, a form of spiritual tender justly exchangeable for roof and fire and meat.

I had as much pleasure and excitement in discovering Mr. Cozzens's *S. S. San Pedro* as I did in first reading Conrad. I do not say that the one artist is as great as the other, for such comparisons are unmannerly and meaningless; but the quality of the pleasure was much the same for me in both cases.

The first time I met H. M. Tomlinson (in 1924) we were at adjoining basins in a London washroom, cleaning our hands. A fanciful person might have imagined that one can sometimes rinse away the dust and soot of daily jargon and exchange clean Idea. At any rate the first thing he said was: "Why are all your critics always complaining that you don't have enough literature? You've had Whitman, Melville, Hawthorne, Thoreau, and Emily Dickinson. Isn't that enough for 75 years or so?"

Walter de la Mare once lectured, very quietly, at the Town Hall. He said "A work of art is a prepared, proportioned, selected illusion of life." Speaking of writers on the supernatural, he said: "The sole test we impose on artists is that of our own nerves. A novelist's ghost is a sure index to his powers." This encourages one about Henry James.

A British Field Marshal, when asked if the Cross-Channel patrol during the War was efficient, replied: "I was able to leave the War office about 1 P. M., and be at G. H. Q. in France in time for tea."

A Scottish private in Cologne at Christmas 1918 was overheard (by C. E. Montague) to say to a downhearted German burgher: "Och, dinna tak' it to hairrt, mon. I tell ye, your lads were grrand."

Our old friend Will H. Low, the painter, has brushed in gold on the door of his studio in Bronxville—in graceful facsimile of Stevenson's handwriting, which he knew so well—these lines by R. L. S.:

This is the study where a smiling God
Beholds each day my stage of labor trod,
And smiles and praises, and I hear him say
The day is brief; be diligent in play.

To recognize fine things whether old or new is always desirable; to recognize them before they are universally acclaimed is the most agreeable and selfish refinement of pleasure. We have not yet heard of an art collection in the East that owns any of the paintings of Grant Wood of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, who interests us as much as any living painter. His work, though we have seen it only in photograph, has made 1931 a more exciting year.

They were bringing heavy little canvas sacks into the lobby of the Prune Exchange Bank, dumping them down on a small truck. A guard with a revolver, deceptively nonchalant, stood outside the revolving door. I suppose my eye may have dwelt upon the scene with unconscious admiration as I stood in line at the window. "Not much there, only nickels and dimes," said the teller consolingly.

On the outer wall of the Panhellenic Hotel on East 49th Street is a Greek alphabet as decoration; but I think they have put the letters Kappa and Iota in the wrong order.

Another matter that interested The Bowling Green was the origin of the poetic sounding name Lagonda for a make of motor car which is deservedly very popular in Britain. Lagonda Distributors, Ltd., of London, write to us:

> In the course of an inquiry into the origin of the name Lagonda we found that this name was given to the Company by an American, the late Mr. Wilbur Gunn, its original founder. He came to this country towards the end of the last century, and in reversal of the normal process married an English heiress, and opened a factory at Staines.
>
> It is said that he gave to his product, which was then a motor bicycle, the name of his home in America—Lagonda.

Is anyone familiar with the name? Is it a place?

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

Ernst Toller, collaborating with Hermann Kesten, has produced his new five-act drama at one of the most distinguished theatres left in Republican Germany, the National Theatre at Mannheim. The title is "Wunder in Amerika" (Miracle in America), and the heroine is Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, founder of Christian Science, and already the subject of critical biographical study in German.

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Round About Parnassus

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THIS week there is a thin enough assortment of books before me. I prefer for the moment to discourse upon a matter I should long have known, and didn't. It was recently brought to my attention that Martin Farquhar Tupper once actually had the temerity to write, in his "Geraldine," a conclusion to the "Christabel" of Coleridge. A poet of my own generation lately lent me a copy of Tupper's "Complete Poetical Works" in which this almost unbelievable atrocity is committed. The stanzas are glaring witness to the difference between the magic of poetry and the hideous dulness of the trumped-up article. Surely Tupper's case was as strange a one as any in English literature. Immensely popular in his day, he perpetrated thousands of lines on everything from "Education" to "Immortality," and today is as completely forgotten as though he had never been. "The Portrait of the Author" that looks out at us opposite the title page is blamelessly smug, demurely dignified. The face seems utterly unlined and the sideburns and black stock are in perfect order. A power in the world of letters of his time, a bard so well received that he could actually conceive of matching his verse against Coleridge's! What a tremendous ironist is Time! And a day's fashions in verse! The style in which Tupper wrote can be recognized in even the exaltation of a Wordsworth—at times, and unfortunately—it was the manner of the period. But when shorn of any individuality and inspiration, how fearfully banal it sounds! Of course, the cheerful exhorter will always appeal to the man in the street who often needs a little encouragement and can go without the poetry. Tupper sang songs like "Never Give Up," and another, "Cheer Up" (for music) of which the first verse cannot but strongly remind us of the lucubrations of a certain most popular songster of our own day:

Never go gloomily, man with a mind!
Hope is a better companion than fear,
Providence, ever benignant and kind,
Gives with a smile what you take with a tear;
All will be right,
Look to the light,—
Morning is ever the daughter of night,
All that was black will be all that is bright,
Cheerily, cheerily then! cheer up!

One trouble about such advice is, of course, that "man with a mind" is not truly addressed at all. Complete fatuity is upheld as the ideal state. And the "Providence, ever benignant and kind," of those days, which really after all has very little to do with mankind's idiocies, was certainly dealing with a bland smile a multitude of delightful horrors, even as today. Optimism is reduced to the grin of an idiot. Even in the normally sanguine such cheery singing must induce a certain hyena mirth. But enough of Tupper.

Here are two more anthologies, the making of which seems endless. Robert Haven Schauffler calls his *A Manthology*, (Dodd, Mead), which hybrid word we cannot but deeply deplore. It is, obviously, "A Collection of Poems for Men," full of old anthological favorites. Naturally there is some good stuff in it and certain inclusions that bespeak a sense of humor. We are glad to see present one of the best colloquial ballads of our time, namely "Colorado Morton's Ride," by Leonard Bacon and Rivers Browne. Hovey, Masefield, Bliss Carman, H. H. Knibbs, and Stevenson are naturally well represented. John Davidson's "A Runnable Stag" is one of the discriminating choices. And mixed with the time-honored there are less-well-known verses that deserve to be known. There is actually a poem by Osbert Sitwell in a manner since discarded which looks strange indeed in this galley. The collection is almost oppressively hale - fellow - well - met, with, of course, horses and dogs and drinking songs and all the paraphernalia of the conquering male. But the way to look at such a book is that it serves to introduce to the man who does not ordinarily read poetry a certain amount of well-wrought verse. Appreciation of the verve and humor of a stave like Badger Clark's "The Glory Trail," may lead one to delve in other good work founded on our best folk-song. And in the section "Men in Love," the average reader will find himself stumbling upon such a gem of purest ray as Andrew Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress." The book is a mélange, despite its apparent organization, but so are most anthologies. The above is about as much as can be said for it, on the whole.

Double Blossoms is an anthology compiled by Edna Porter, published by Lewis Copeland of New York, and consists of a group of poems addressed to Helen Keller. A thoroughly deserved tribute, though one could wish that the poetry were better. Zona Gale, Lola Ridge, and Evelyn Scott write actual poems, however, and in what is really prose arranged as free verse George Jay Smith gives us an accurate piece of reporting concerning how Helen Keller appeared to him as she spoke in public:

With sightless eyes almost fixed and void of expression,
She stood and made her lips laboriously taught, utter words,
Words that came forth colorless, monotonously chanted,
Difficult to understand, for she could not sing the customary tunes of language,
Yet words that were every one a triumph, an achievement, a wonder,
For they uttered the soul of one who had out-generaled fate
And become a great woman.

That description is worth the greater part of the rest of the book. Lola Ridge's poem, "Vision," is full of her true fire, Zona Gale's phrase, "One remembers her as one remembers the hours of hearing great news," lingers in the mind, and Hartley Alexander felicitously recalls a phrase of Helen Keller's own, "In the white dark of the falling snow."

Brother Leo has introduced *Candles in the Wind* (The Dial Press), by Charles J. Quirk, S. J. The little book is entirely of quatrains, recalling to one the favorite forms of Father Tabb, to whom, indeed, one poem is dedicated. Father Quirk is, however, greatly inferior as a poet to that other who had, as the present poet says, the faculty of making appear "All the vast world sculptured in miniature." Father Quirk's verses are too innocently devotional for the most part to warrant the process of breaking a butterfly upon a wheel.

Don Blanding's *Songs of the Seven Senses*, (Dodd, Mead) is distinguished by the author's own illustrations and decorations. Within a certain restricted field of commercial decoration his pencil is accomplished. But it all leaves one with a sense of stereotype. At that, the technique of his drawing is better than the technique of his verse. The Honolulu *Star Bulletin* has used some of these poems, for Mr. Blanding is at home in Hawaii. But they are distinctly the poems of journalism. There is a great deal sung about the vagabond soul, and so on. It is all fairly trivial.

Paul James, in *And Then What?* (Knopf) appeals to me in his role of light versifier, in time snatched from the composition of popular song-hits. Also, he can occasionally inject into his work that strange unanalyzable element that makes verse poetry. The following may seem slight, and yet the phantoms of Andrew Lang and of Austin Dobson assure me that it is likely to linger in men's minds.

After all these years
Of laughter and tears,
Does any one know
Where old tears flow?
Can any one say
What happens to laughter
One moment after
It dies away?

According to the will of Arthur Schnitzler, the Viennese novelist, who died recently, his diaries until 1899 must not be published until twenty years after his death, and the others not until forty years after. His autobiography is not to appear for twenty years, and then without any alterations or cuts.

KENNETH BURKE'S

COUNTER-STATEMENT

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Et Praeterea Nihil

GODBEY. By EDGAR LEE MASTERS. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company. 1931. Limited Edition. $10.

Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER

WHATEVER else Mr. Masters may lack, he has bravery. This was made apparent some years ago by the candid "Spoon River Anthology" and by the recent, if lop-sided, "Lincoln: The Man." What else Mr. Masters possesses as a poet is not so apparent. The clinching epithets, the powerful and consistent objectivity, the terse condensations of whole communal biographies, the sweep and pungence which made "Spoon River Anthology" so astonishing a performance are patently, painfully absent. The rhetoric of some of the subsequent poems, a rhetoric rising occasionally into eloquence, finds no echo here. In these almost six thousand lines of rhymed verse there are a few sharply projected ideas, infrequent scenes over which any reader might care to linger, three or four surprisingly clear lyrics, and literally thousands of pedestrian couplets given over to debate and diatribe.

Those who read Mr. Masters's "Jack Kelso" will remember that, toward the end of the tale, the hero intended to bury himself in an abandoned well. But another person, the boy Godbey, following a wounded bird, fell into the fateful opening and the aged Kelso, rescuing the lad, died not only by crawling into the well but by falling out of it. The same Godbey, now nearing middle age, is the chief figure of the new poem. As the narrative opens he has wandered toward the same well again and what ensues is a progression of fifteen scenes or visions. The "drama" is fitful and obscure, the symbols are arbitrary and seldom persuasive, but the purpose is clear enough. Godbey, like Kelso, comes to the well—due emphasis being placed on the association of wells, visions, and truth by the repetition—and is conducted into another sphere. It is a realm of beauty gone wrong, peace grown sour, liberty enslaved, the body debased and the spirit betrayed—in short a realm in no way different from this topsyturvy world and, in particular, the corner we live in. The poem proceeds to the inevitable and ironic—"and so it was all a dream."

The initial reaction against "Godbey" is that it scarcely needed so artificial and antiquated a device. The explicit paradoxes and the obvious ironies are not heightened by the mechanism, nor are their edges sharpened by over-familiarity—Mr. Masters himself having employed them in one form or another for the last fifteen years. All the characters talk in an elegantly inflected speech that recalls nothing more actual than old-fashioned fustian. This, for example, is Folker (a parody of a Rotarian) speaking:

At last Geras by inspiration,
Being a consecrated Methodist,
And something of a symbolist,
Bethought him of an honor to the nation:
So William McKinley's name will shine
In lights between the Gothic spires.
Its altar will be made a shrine
For hearts where burn the holiest fires
Of love domestic, abstinence from wine,
And hatred of people who confuse
Rights, liberties, and all such things misuse.

And this is Rousseau, resurrected before a temple to Isis, talking, more or less credibly, in the same stumbling idiom:

O tragedy unseen
Of us blamed for the guillotine,
That your America inherited
The Reformation, while the Renaissance
Was your withheld inheritance.
O thou Ironic Mockery which sped
Calvin and Luther, and the unappeased
Priests to devour and rule your fresh sweet soil,
To darken your land with hate and toil,
And make the new man like the old diseased;
Whilst I, whilst Greece and Hesiod,
And Locke who worshipped Nature's God,
And mankind loved, are childless. . . .

But the fault lies deeper than the device. One can wade through, though one can hardly thrill to, Mr. Masters's discourses on prohibition, war, theology, the state of criticism in America, grand larcenies, and petty politics. One can endure the jargon of pseudo-philosophy and pseudo-science, of endocrine and gastropods, "enchanted plasms" and ochlocrats. But one cannot pretend to applaud or even to follow the verse in which they are cast. Mr. Masters has lost us not because his later poems grow increasingly dogmatic, but because they are dull.

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ANNALS OF AMERICA

Brave History

CABALLEROS: The Romance of Santa Fe and the Southwest. By RUTH LAUGHLIN BARKER. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1931. $3.

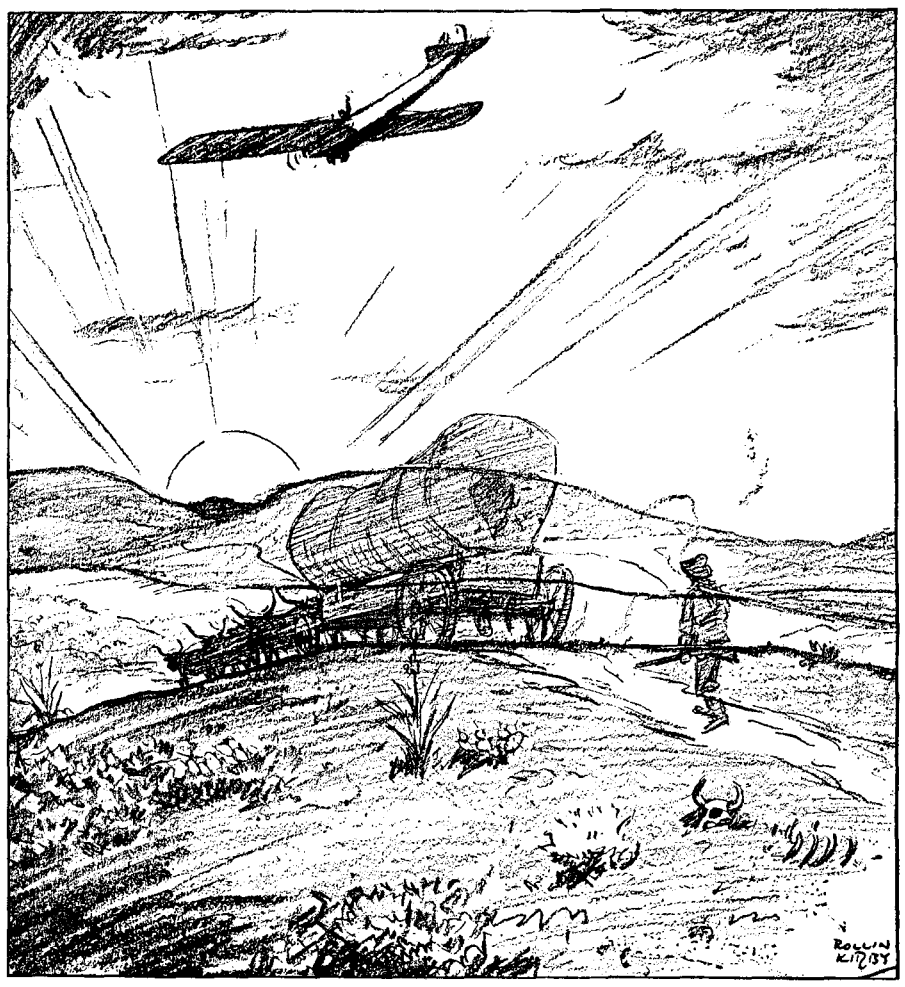
Reviewed by EDWIN L. SABIN

THIS volume is written by one to whom its New Mexico Southwest is her own land, "Anglo" though she may be. In New Mexico, as Mrs. Barker relates, the people of Spanish blood hold themselves to be the native Americans, whereas the residents and transients of other white blood are "Anglos" entered into the birthright of an older citizenship. Yet back of these Spanish-Americans, as distinguished from the "Anglo-Americans," are the Pueblo Indians, who may look upon all others as pretenders. Mrs. Barker nevertheless is not without claim to kinship with the soil. Her father was that Napoleon B. Laughlin who arrived in New Mexico in 1879 and who, practising law and politics in Santa Fe, in 1894 was appointed as associate chief justice in the supreme court of the Territory. Her book is dedicated to him, "who loved the old town."

They have a saying down on the border that whoever drinks of the water of the Lower Rio Grande will return. *Quién sabe?* That depends upon why he leaves and whither he goes. But there is more truth than fable in the constant tug at the heartstrings of the exile who has seen the sunset crimsoning the Sangre de Cristo Range, who has gazed at the distant, empurpled slopes of the canyoned Cerillos, Jemez, and Sandía buttresses, who has strolled the old plaza in Santa Fe, has watched the fagot vendors trail down with their laden burros, has tried to fathom the secrets of walled patios and winding lanes and blanketed figures, has envisioned the tumultuous entrance of the Santa Fe Trail caravans by way of that last stretch, College Street, to the Fonda and the plaza—in short, one who, in Santa Fe and in the rural districts, has been what the Spanish term "simpático," or sympathetic, which is to say, receptive.

The "Anglo" in Santa Fe and vicinity who is not of temperament "simpático" misses much. Santa Fe has become the Mecca of artists, writers, health-seekers, and dilettantes who find themselves to be most content when they have adopted the line of least resistance to the spirit of the setting. The zeal for going native, or, say, going "caballero," may sometimes be carried rather far. In the reviewer's day in Santa Fe, "Anglos" who had growled in steam-heated apartments back East, heroically hovered in sweaters and shawls before the meagre corner fireplaces of cracked old adobes and strove to like it. Since then many of them have learned that the Lares and Penates of those romantic domiciles are not offended by stoves or even by modern heating plants.

Mrs. Barker's generous book is delightfully "simpático." It is a treasure-trove of brave history, of lore and of customs handed down through the centuries, of colorful information upon Santa Fe and the Southwest. Politics and religion, Saints' days and piñon-nut feasts, folklore plays and domestic conventions, official proceedings in two languages, the rites of the Penitentes and Witter Bynner "in a scarlet flannel shirt and Mexican sandals," the renovated Palace of the Governors and the primitive villages of Agua Fria and Tierra Amarilla, terraced Hillside Avenue and the tortuous street of the Acequia Madre, or Mother Ditch, where women with the household wash bend over the muddy brink—herein, assorted by chapters, is expressed the atmosphere of a commingling of three races in an area which, as she proclaims, "has escaped that flood of boosting standardization which makes the bigger and better Main Street in Minneapolis the same as the bigger and better Main Street in Dallas." This, in the "youngest state" with the "oldest capital in the United States"—a combination that might easily fall spoil to the greed of progress. But Santa Fe, standing upon its assets of "climate, curios, and politics," ripened by time, and



THE SANTA FE TRAIL
FROM ROLLIN KIRBY'S "HIGHLIGHTS" (PAYSON).

true to its pueblo origin, enforces an ordinance prohibiting buildings of more than three stories.

"Caballeros" is endowed with that charm of style, that fulness of an author who knows, and that affection contributed by a labor of love, which clothe fact and fancy in a new garb. The little pen sketches by Norma van Sweringen, scattered through the pages, add to the fascination of the text.

The Voice of the Trail

FORTY-NINERS. By ARCHER BUTLER HULBERT. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1931. $5.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

MR. HULBERT has written a curious book. It represents a distillation of a vast amount of historical information on the 'Forty-Niners, much of it original if not strikingly new, into a semi-fictitious narrative. From scores of diaries, autobiographies, and travels, published or unpublished, the author has constructed a composite 'Forty-Niner. This imaginary person, an Eastern lad who sets out from Independence, Mo., in May, 1849, for the mines, is represented as writing home an incredibly thorough journal of his experiences. He relates nothing, of course, that is not vouched for somewhere in the manuscripts and books which Mr. Hulbert has consulted. A considerable number of actual persons appear under their rightful names, but mingled with them are various imaginary travelers who are distinguished by nicknames—Pickpan, Ox-Bow, and the like—and who are characters from contemporary cartoons. That is, the people, like the incidents, are partly individuals, partly typical. The narrative covers five months and deals almost wholly with the experiences of the long transcontinental journey, offering comparatively little information upon California scenes and events.

For the matter of the book every reader must have the utmost respect; as to its method many will feel serious misgivings. Mr. Hulbert has brought prolonged research to these three hundred pages. The subject is not a mere excursion down a picturesque and easy bypath of history. It is much larger, more varied, and more difficult than the ordinary reader who knows only Parkman's "California and Oregon Trail" and Bayard Taylor's "Eldorado" would suppose. The accurate delineation of the trail itself, constantly shifting as waterholes were sucked dry, additional cut-offs found, Indians made hostile, or new trading-posts established; the characteristic adventures and difficulties met by emigrants on each special section of the route—the Platte, the South Pass area, the Continental Divide, the Utah and Nevada deserts, the Sierra; the kinds of equipment; the varieties of emigrants, Indians, and guides; the wild life—every such phase of the subject requires expert study, and has had it from Mr. Hulbert. With marked success he has thrown his narrative back into the psychological setting of the time. The ideas, campfire talk, and humor of 1849 are reproduced in a way possible only to a man steeped in the literature of the subject. Perhaps there is a bit too much humor; the grim hardships, dangers, and despairs of the journey probably made the story a darker one than the author's wealth of cartoons and songs would suggest. But no element of the 'Forty-Niners' experience is slighted.

Mr. Hulbert, in short, is an excellent historian. He has proportioned his narrative carefully. The chapters represent different sections of the trail all the way from the "coast of Nebraska" to Hangtown (later Placerville) in the land of gold. He never forgets his major themes of interest, which are the character and aims of the emigrants, the problems of the journey and the special means used to solve them, the fast-changing aspects of the Western scene in this eventful year, and above all, the effects of their experiences upon the 'Forty-Niners. The narrative is kept fluent and interesting without resort to melodrama. There are no Indian battles, no ambushes by hostile Mormons, no scenes of starvation amid the Sierra snows, and not even any love episodes. So easy and even captivating is the story that the reader may not note how great are the pains expended upon an accurate treatment of many minor topics. Curious facts are developed in every chapter. The range of the cholera and other diseases; types of vehicles used; effect of the gold-fever on the Indians; popular ideas of the Mormons, and their real character; use of profanity and of the lingo of the mines; methods of getting cattle across the long desert stretches; catalogues of discarded goods along the trail; forms of hysteria and even dementia among the immigrants as the journey lengthens; the extent of drinking and gaming—on a hundred such subjects Mr. Hulbert is full, graphic, and beyond doubt scrupulously accurate.

So good is it all as history that the reader must wonder why Mr. Hulbert did not write it in the ordinary historical form. Doubtless he gains something in placing his narrative in the mouth of an imaginary traveller—something in vividness, realism, compactness; but many will believe that he loses more. The narrator is never really a human being, so that the intimate individual note is lost. He cannot be a human being, for he sees and records far too much for any single person. He is the Voice of the Trail. The story, moreover, is not written with the color and glow that belong to fictitious narrative. Compar with—say—Parkman, it is distinctly f in tenor; so that Mr. Hulbert's literary d vice has not gained him any distinct literary benefit in style. The man who is interested in facts and their sources will find the book less useful than if written as formal history. In its fictitious form some elements of the narrative have of necessity been curtailed and slighted. Yet it is perhaps unjust to wish that so good a book had been offered in somewhat different guise. It is to be hoped that Mr. Hulbert will supplement it with another volume dealing with the California experiences of the Forty-Niners.

Ten States

MODERN SOUTH AMERICA. By C. W. DOMVILLE FIFE. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. 1931. $3.50.

Reviewed by HENRY KITTREDGE NORTON

IF one should choose any ten countries of Europe and attempt to describe their people, suggest their history, analyze their problems, and appraise their culture, in a volume of some 300 pages, we should hardly expect the result to be satisfactory.

Mr. Domville Fife, out of the wealth of his own experience as a traveller in Latin American countries, has attempted to bring something of the ten states of South America between the covers of a single volume. The result is open to the inevitable objections. There are too many countries and there is too little about each one.

There may be armchair travellers who will enjoy a literary flight across the great southern continent with its bird's-eye views of many and varied lands. But one can hardly avoid urging such travellers to take up books which will give them a deeper insight into a more restricted subject-matter. For the traveller who actually visits South America, the present volume is no more than an appetizer for each country.

With these objections registered, it is only fair to say that the author has acquitted himself well of the assigned task. His book is written in an easy style and, so far as it goes, is generally accurate not only in detail but in atmosphere.

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Good But Neglected

By ANNE L. HAIGHT

THERE was a group of contributors to *Punch* who wrote and illustrated children's books. Mark Lemon, the editor of *Punch*, wrote "The Enchanted Doll, a Fairy Tale for Young People." It was illustrated by Richard Doyle, a contributor, who also illustrated Ruskin's "The King of the Golden River." The book was written for Mary and Kate, the little daughters of Charles Dickens, and the whole combination was a very happy one. Written in the style of Dickens's "Christmas Stories," it is about a discontented dollmaker and an Ethiopian fairy "long before the railroads had cut up the dancing grounds of the fairies, or the shrill whistle of the locomotive had frightened the 'good people.'" The story ends well, and it is more than suspected that Gog and Magog, which occupy so prominent a position in the Guild Hall of London, are the identical dolls made by Jacob Pout, the dollmaker in the story, after he had reformed. It is a thoroughly delightful book. Equally charming is "Lady Arabella, the Adventures of a London Doll," by Miss Pardoe, illustrated by George Cruikshank, also a contributor to *Punch*. A little girl in London saw a dilapidated doll on a refuse heap. The doll spoke to her, saying:

> You are looking at me with pity, little lady; and fallen as I am, it does me good to discover that anyone can still feel for my misfortune. What, however, would be your grief could you know all I have endured? There was a time, and I am not too proud to own it, when I should have considered it quite a condescension to talk of myself to a little girl in a printed frock and a nankeen bonnet, but that time has long been over, and now in return for your compassion I will tell you the story of my life.

Then follows the chronicle of her varied career told in a most interesting way. Cruikshank has executed the line drawings with much spirit and understanding. I consider both these books about dolls well worth republishing, and I do not think the modern child would consider either of them old-fashioned.

"Daddy Jake, The Runaway, and Other Stories by Uncle Remus" is a delightful book which deserves more recognition, but has been overshadowed by Joel Chandler Harris's more famous Uncle Remus Stories. It is published in the original form with the Kemble illustrations, and none could be better, for he certainly knew how to draw darkies and animals. The story of Daddy Jake gives a very true picture of plantation life in the 1880's. The other stories are simply a continuation of the first Uncle Remus series and have the same atmosphere and originality. I think that it is sometimes felt that darky dialect is difficult for a child to read, but "Frawg" and "Boochy's Wings," by Annie Vaughn Weaver, published this year by Stokes, have been widely read and enjoyed in spite of the dialect, which goes to prove that any really clever stories like all these will be read anyway.

I cannot speak too enthusiastically about Bret Harte's "Queen of the Pirate Isle," illustrated by Kate Greenaway, 1887. I think that there are very few children nowadays who know the story, as it has been out of print many years for copyright reasons and has only just been republished by Frederick Warne & Co. ($1.50). It has the freshness and vigor of the West, and the undercurrent of humor adds much to the charm and reality of the characters. An imaginative little girl and her playmates, who live in a mining town, run away to be pirates, and the most unexpectetd events follow. The little Chinaman, who is one of the runaways, is particularly well drawn and adds much local color to the story, for Bret Harte understood the Oriental mind well. The combination of Bret Harte and Kate Greenaway is rather a startling one, but the illustrations are realistic and in keeping with the text. The vignette on the title page is supposed to be one of the most exquisite ever executed by her. Ruskin, whose correspondence with Kate Greenaway covered a period of twenty years, wrote to her about the book: "Yes, it has come—you're a dear, good Katie—and it's lovely. The best thing you have ever done—it's so real and natural. It is all delightful, and the text also—and the print."

Another book illustrated by Kate Greenaway which has also come into print after a long absence is "A Day in a Child's Life" (Frederick Warne & Co.: $2). It is a collection of well-known verses set to music by Miles B. Foster and decorated in Miss Greenaway's characteristic style. It includes the prayer, "Jesus, Tender Shepherd, Hear Me," with the familiar music.

Frank Stockton's books read just as well today as when they were written in the second half of the nineteenth century. While not great literature, they are much too good to fade into oblivion, for they are much better than most modern tales of adventure written for boys and girls. Stockton's style is crisp, and to the point, his humor philosophic, and his romance not too sentimental. Probably the best known is his very original and extremely well written "The Queen's Museum and Other Stories." For older children is "The Casting Away of Mrs. Lecks and Mrs. Aleshine," an adventure story, filled with irresistible wit and humor about two widows who become shipwrecked en route to Japan. With Mr. Craig, a fellow passenger, they left the sinking ship in a boat which sprang a leak and sank under them. Their life-preservers saved them, and by using the oars as paddles and sweeping in the manner of brooms the ladies swept themselves in the wake of the swimming Mr. Craig to safety on an island. Having always lived in a small American town, they expected to see strange things in the outer world and were not surprised when they did and so took all their unusual experiences as a matter of course. The story is very ingenious, and the illustrations by Frederic Dorr Steele add greatly to the amusement. "The Adventures of Captain Horn," by the same author, is a tale of shipwreck and of a search for the lost gold of the Incas, written in a brisk manner, event following event with the rapidity of the most sensational moving picture of today. This book should be especially enjoyed just now because of the ever growing interest in Central and South American affairs.

So many alphabets are stupid because of the labored effort of finding words beginning with the necessary letter. The most spontaneous and original one I know is "Peter Piper's Practical Principles of Plain and Perfect Pronunciation," and I wish that some kind publisher would republish it with the original droll, quaint woodcuts—*not* new illustrations. There was a facsimile edition published by Grant Richards in London, 1902, and the alphabet was mentioned by Mrs. Hewins in "A Mid-Century Child." I give you a sample:

A a

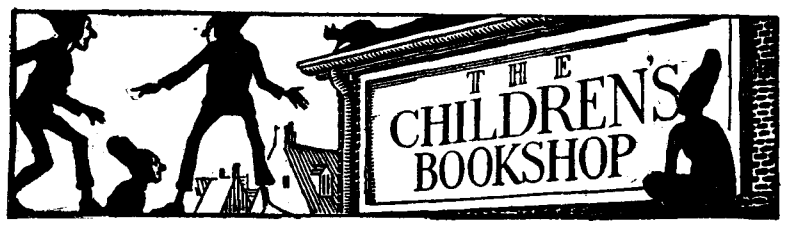
Andrew Airpump ask'd his Aunt her Ailment:

Did Andrew Airpump ask his Aunt her Ailment?

If Andrew Airpump ask'd his Aunt her Ailment,

Where was the Ailment of Andrew Airpump's Aunt?

ILLUSTRATION FOR "PETER PIPER'S ALPHABET"



Conducted by KATHERINE ULRICH

For College

HIS OWN STAR. By RUSSELL GORDON CARTER. Boston: Little, Brown & Company. 1931. $2.

JOHNNY BREE. By WILLIAM HEYLIGER. New York: D. Appleton & Company. 1931. $2.

Reviewed by MITCHELL CHARNLEY

"SHALL I go to college?" is the question asked by both Mr. Carter and Mr. Heyliger for American youth in these two books. Of course the answer, in both cases, is the same. But the methods by which the two writers reach the answer vary interestingly.

It is, perhaps, unfortunate for the Carter book that it appears in competition with that of Mr. Heyliger. Mr. Heyliger, author of such excellent books for boys as "Quinby and Son" and "High Benton," has lived up to his other works in "Johnny Bree," and he meets the problem and handles it in a manner more effective than that of Mr. Carter in "His Own Star."

"His Own Star" is unquestionably a good story for boys. It takes young Frank Madison, honor student and star athlete, at the end of the third year of high school and shows him eager to get on his own. He finds a job at a summer resort, barking for cheap boardwalk attractions, and this leads to a place as personal assistant to Rex Brayton, millionaire owner of the resort. He goes to New York, proves an unusual ability at handling Brayton's affairs, rescues the millionaire from a spectacular fire which destroys the resort in midwinter, and eventually decides—as a result of his contact with important business men—that he needs college education.

The background of the story is good, and Mr. Carter's purpose is obviously sincere. But the tale lacks fire. Boys would read the yarn through, but there are times when interest would lag.

Interest never lags in Mr. Heyliger's story. Johnny Bree is a cock-sure, happy-go-lucky young orphan who deserts a succession of petty jobs in New York City to seek work in the mining camp of which his father had once been chief. He believes that life is too short to waste in solving algebraic problems and reading silly textbooks; he is looking for a job that will keep him clothed and fed, and he thinks cynically that a boy without "drag" would have no chance of getting anywhere anyway. Through the wise diplomacy of Mr. Hague, successor to his father, however, his fighting spirit and his ambition are aroused; and his loyalty and courage are enlisted in a truly thrilling climactic incident in which he struggles to save the mine and the miners from disaster when a flood breaks into the shafts and drifts. Eventually he, too, decides that college training is more than worth the effort.

The background—an Adirondack iron mine—is complicated and, in the hands of an inexperienced writer, might become confusing, might befog the story. Mr. Heyliger never permits it to do that. The main thread of the tale he keeps uppermost throughout, though at the same time he manages to reveal an immense amount of information about the mysterious workings of men and machines hundreds of feet underground. And the tale moves along swiftly, with plenty of exciting incident. The characters in it are real men. In short, it's an excellent job of story-telling, quite aside from its basic thesis.

And so Mr. Heyliger's tale, taking a boy without hope and showing the development of ambition and purpose in him, seems to me more effective than Mr. Carter's, which throws on the right path an ambitious but misdirected boy. Both books are good books for boys to have in their libraries. If they are to have only one of the two, it had better be "Johnny Bree."

Ships and the Sea

THE BOOK OF THE SAILING SHIP. By STANLEY ROGERS. Illustrated by the author. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co. 1931. $2.75.

THE PACIFIC. By STANLEY ROGERS. The same.

Reviewed by ALFRED LOOMIS

AN habitual reader of marine literature becomes in the end a bit book-shy. New experiences in ships or old experiences freshly told elicit his attention, but when he is confronted with another history of sailing, the literary sea dog feels inclined to run for cover. What, he asks, can be written that hasn't been written before? Can one man verbally reconstruct the ships of the Egyptians better than another man has done? Can a more exciting race be found than that of the tea clippers *Ariel*, *Taeping*, and *Serica* from Foo-Chow to London? Can the famous gilded carving on the high poop of the *Grâce à Dieu* be better gilded?

A negative answer to all these questions having been expected, I am delighted to find that in "The Book of the Sailing Ship" Stanley Rogers has replied in the affirmative. It was written, as the author says in his foreword, expressly for boys, and the first few pages, which are a little condescending, bear testimony to his intention. When he stepped well into his stride, however, he forgot to write down to a juvenile audience, and the balance of the book is most happily executed. Boys will like it, for it tells the history of sailing ships simply and vividly. The story unfolds now in broad sweeps and again in sharp detail—such as the detail of painting the gun carriages and the interiors of old-time men-of-war a bright red, so that spilled blood would be inconspicuous on the day of battle. The outstanding types of the separate eras are so engagingly described that they almost take on form and substance; while the many illustrations beautifully and accurately done by the author complete the illusion that the ships of Ericson, Columbus, Cook, and Bull Samuels still live.

But in writing of Samuels and his famous Atlantic packet *Dreadnought*, Mr. Rogers fell into a trap which was identified and uncovered in Clark's standard "Clipper Ship Era." The present author speaks of the *Dreadnought's* having crossed from New York to England in nine days and seventeen hours. Clark, in commenting on this fabulous passage, nearly four days shorter than the record, wrote, twenty years ago:

> How this mythical tale originated is difficult to imagine, but it has been passed along from one scribe to another these many years, until at last it has reached the dignity of an "historical fact," having recently been embalmed in an encyclopedia. Curiously enough, Captain Samuels appears to be the only person who has written about the *Dreadnought* who does not refer to this fable. In his memoirs he makes no mention of it.

Mr. Rogers must have fallen foul of that encyclopedia. But only once. Informative, informed, and informal, the book is one which should be given to every boy interested in ships and sailing.

Over the other volume from the same pen it is not quite so easy to be enthusiastic. "The Pacific" is a companion volume to one called "The Atlantic," and I am afraid that, as such, it falls into class one referred to above, even verging a trifle on class two. Or is the tempering of my enthusiasm due to the fact that the romantic islands of the Pacific so particularly described seem as yet untouched by the foot of the author? In reading my history of bygone sailing ships I am satisfied if the job is enlighteningly and entertainingly done; but in gaining geographic and ethnologic information about the Pacific I want myself and my boys reassured now and then that the author has cruised those parts in small boats, supplementing with personal experience his forays into library and museum.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received.

Biography

BODYGUARD UNSEEN: A True Autobiography. By VINCENZO D'AQUILA. Smith. 1931. $2.50.

There are some bizarre episodes and provocative ideas in this candid autobiography of an Italian soldier-pacifist. Vincenzo D'Aquila says the spirit moved him "to write down these incidents of war and folly" but that he harbors "no rancor or bitterness towards those whose lack of vision brought the vicissitudes here related to me." Like the author of "All Quiet on the Western Front," Mr. D'Aquila was disheartened by the futility of battle and the injustice of forcing men to fight for a cause in which they did not always believe. In the so-called pomp and glory of military life, he saw little more than hypocrisy and small-mindedness. One could only laugh when a sentinel, who slept soundly in the face of peril and duty, was awarded a War Cross for faithful watchkeeping or when some distinguished war chiefs revealed little or no intelligence.

Mr. D'Aquila is of religious temperament and has much to say of the Bodyguard Unseen, the Invisible Protector who was with him in all his strange experiences. He over-emphasizes this spiritual note and at times is intolerably didactic. As to style, it is unfortunate that innumerable clichés, split infinitives, and small errors should detract from a fairly competent narrative.

KING, QUEEN, JACK. By MILTON WALDMAN. Longmans, Green. 1931.

Mr. Waldman's book was originally written as an introductory chapter to a biography of Elizabeth. Acting on the advice of a friend to expand his material, Mr. Waldman developed his essay into twelve chapters and called it a book. The story covers a period of four months. In this brief time Philip of Spain's messengers had courted the young Queen for their master, avowing his deep love, and hoping that England would be saved for Spain and Catholicism. It was an intense period in the life of the English nation, and had the author given himself a wider theme than that of the courtship itself, he could have justified the length of his book. As it is, one feels that he has gathered together every note and reference in his files that bore on the courtship, expecting records alone to sustain the reader's interest.

There is so much intrinsic value in his material, that in spite of the endless negotiation, plots, hedging, and faithless bickerings which it chronicles, Mr. Waldman's book is good reading. He is proud of Gloriana, and fair to Philip. One almost feels that a man who had been forced to be the husband of Queen Mary was in justice entitled to some consideration by the English. Mr. Waldman's story is not without a glimmering of humor and a fine sense of fair play.

From a historical point of view his book might even be called an excellent contribution, since it gives such a detailed and clear account of one phase of Elizabeth's reign. Due to the emphasis on the courtship, however, the impression grows upon the reader that all Elizabeth had to do in those first four months was to catch her fish without losing her bait. The many other complex problems that should play a part in this study are too briefly mentioned. This tends to make the work thin in spite of its intrinsic interest. The author's own comment in the preface describes it very well. He says, "it is a door that grew into a house."

EUGÉNIE, EMPRESS OF THE FRENCH. By OCTAVE AUBREY. Lippincott. 1931. $3.50.

M. Aubry's biography of the Empress Eugénie, somewhat infelicitously translated by F. M. Atkinson, is a sentimental and melodramatic presentation of a life that contained much melodrama, if little sentiment. Its heroine is set forth at full length and very glibly. She romps as a child at Madrid; she flirts too long as a maiden in Paris; she poses and schemes as the Empress of the French; she broods and schemes and grows old, not ungracefully, at Farnborough and Cap Martin. There is nothing here (except the sentiment) that will be new to the reader of Second Empire memoirs, but the book ought to attract those who know Eugénie only by her hat. Incidentally, the hat is included here in a picture; its resemblance to its modern imitation is not striking.

Fiction

CROSSINGS. By ALICE MASSIE. Century. 1931. $2.

When Janet, a middle-aged Englishwoman, went by airplane to Paris, she remembered her previous crossings by boat and how remarkably they had influenced her life. The first time she went to Paris she had met charming David Challoner who loved her but thought it discreet to accept the affection of her employer's wife, Simone. Out of this entanglement there had come misunderstanding and embittered feelings. Janet returned to England, found congenial work, and believed she was through with love. Then, crossing again years later, she met Neil Wetherby, an artist, who was even more lovable than David. But he was not dependable. To Janet nothing seemed dependable: David had left her for Simone and Neil left her to go to war. Then David came back—and died.

All these happenings are seen in retrospect. In the last chapter the author resumes her story where she had begun at the first of the book—Janet's last and fatal flight from England to France.

The narrative is skilfully told and much of it is absorbing. The French background is colorful and the characters are of passing interest, even if they are not memorable.

LOVE WITHOUT MONEY. By FLOYD DELL. Farrar & Rinehart. 1931. $2.

Mr. Floyd Dell has preëmpted the field of adolescence, and in that field he is a skilful practitioner. His characters inevitably come to life—you may see them in any parked automobile, on any dance-floor. They are well-observed and accurately, even imaginatively, recorded. Beyond that point, the author has not chosen to progress. In his latest novel, we encounter once more his familiar young people, but now they have grown up—if not chronologically, then developmentally. They have kept pace with the age. Here are no mooncalves, sighing with unrequited love. Peter's and Gretchen's love is amply requited; they are easy to satisfy. Gretchen has given herself to Peter (they do not "love" each other—oh no! They are "modern" enough to realize that love affairs "do not last." They are just out for a good time) and Peter is content to take her on her own terms.

They have but one problem: how to possess each other without interference, and in private. For once the blurb-writer is accurate and unhyperbolic. "They wished they had at least a room of their own with a door to lock." Thus, the novel is concerned with their hectic efforts to obtain that room. They leave school, they go to work; they fight with their parents and are eminently sensible and grown-up. Meantime, they know how to utilize porch-swings, auditorium staircases, patches of bare rock in a winter park. And they obtain their room. Therefore the problem resolves itself into no problem at all, and this conscious limitation of the author's scope restricts the book, draws it down to extremely small dimensions, and militates against any real importance it might otherwise have achieved as an exposition of a human problem. It makes delightful reading.

THIRTEEN MEN IN THE MINE. By PIERRE HUBERMONT. Translated by L. H. TITTERTON. Macmillan. 1931. $2.

In a series of vivid scenes this novel describes a Belgian mining community and one of its disasters. The two leading characters, who present the extremes of the picture, are Prosper, the coal-miner, and Lièvin, the engineer. By birth and inclination Lièvin is allied with the miners but his position, gained after long struggle, and his ambition hold him on the side of the Company. Prosper is a man of some importance among the miners. He is loyal to his friends and steady in his work. It is this class loyalty that really causes the explosion and the subsequent fire that traps thirteen men beneath the earth, and it is Lièvin's decision that makes the mine their tomb.

The novel is compressed and the style, laconic and detached (a style which the translator has caught and preserved with supreme success), fits the subject admirably, but this reader did not find the story emotionally stirring. By implication one gets the squalor and the dreary drama of the miners' lives, their efforts for an effective organization, and the attitude of the owners, but except in the case of Prosper and his friendship for the poor weak Jeansef, one does not share the squalor or the drama save as an intellectual experience.

KATRIN BECOMES A SOLDIER. By ADRIENNE THOMAS. Little, Brown. 1931. $2.50.

This is a German novel which has already won deservedly high praise in Europe. It has now been admirably translated into English by Margaret Goldsmith. It stands out among war books both for its intrinsic merits and also for the fact that it presents the story of the war from an unusual angle—that of its impact upon the intelligence and feelings of a young girl. The story is made all the more interesting because the girl is a Jewess living in Alsace-Lorraine and therefore possesses not only some of the internationalism of the Jewish race but also the mixed sympathies of the inhabitants of the much-disputed province. The story is written in the form of a diary and is told with a delicacy and tenderness which give it distinction among novels of the war.

NAPOLEON AND THE COSSACKS. By GENERAL P. N. KRASSNOFF. New York: Duffield & Green. 1931. $3.50.

The indefatigable General Krassnoff, author of "From Double Eagle to Red Flag"—what a blessing to themselves and the world in general if more Russian émigrés had a fraction of his industry!—presents another novel, this time a formidable narrative in the Scott-Dumas style, running to 600 pages, and all about Napoleon's fatal invasion of Russia and the Europe of 1812-14.

The novelty of General Krassnoff's view of a period, the romantic surfaces of which have been made familiar in innumerable pictures, stories, and plays, is that he is always looking westward. The "Holy Russia," now no more, is the home of his heart and the place from which he watches the approach and the retreat of the Grande Armée, and the climax of his story is not Napoleon's entry into Moscow but that other triumphant moment, which comparatively few westerners remember, when the Tzar Alexander and the Russian troops entered Paris.

Kouzma, a simple-hearted, dashing young Cossack—the typical Krassnoff hero—and Evgueny, an aristocrat, are the two Russians whose careers serve to personify the epoch. There are cuirrassiers and bearskin hats, velvet cloaks and capes trimmed with fur, the boom of old-fashioned cannon, and the smell of gunpowder roundabout Königsberg and Vilna, and cavalry horses drink from the frosty pools and go splashing through the ice-fringed streams in the Bug and Niemen valleys. There are intrigues and historical figures, glimpses of Constantinople and of Petersburg, and from time to time Holy Russia, whose Czar, although he might still permit serfs, is himself a "serf before God," rising above the rest like the booming music of one of its own church anthems.

Evgueny comes to a bad end, but Kouzma, after a few youthful slips and setbacks, wins through, at last, in true Krassnoff style, to the nice young Nadenka who has been waiting for him. The novel is not for the hurried or those insistent on "ideas," but is full of authentic color, like all of the old General's work, and of his real gift for story-telling. Entertaining "supplementary reading" for youngish students

WITHOUT MY CLOAK. By KATE O'BRIEN. Doubleday, Doran. 1931. $2.50.

This is another of the chronicle novels of a family. Its four hundred and sixty-nine pages tell the story of the Considines of Mellick from 1860 to 1877, with a prologue in 1789 presenting a brief view of the horse thief who came to Mellick and founded the family. The Considines are a great clan, with so strong a sense of family

(*Continued on page* 418)

NOTABLE PUBLICATIONS OF THE YEAR

The Unknown War
by Winston S. Churchill
author of "The World Crisis"

"Not only the best . . . but the single volume so far produced that supplies even an adequate notion of the struggle on the Eastern fronts during the World War."—*Frank H. Simonds* in the *New York Herald Tribune*. $5.00

Winston Churchill

Discretions
by Frances, Countess of Warwick

"It is the things she was *not* asked to write that interest us most," says the *Atlantic Monthly*, "including valuable comments on politicians and prime ministers, soldiers, and generals." $3.00

Gardens of Colony and State
Compiled and edited for the Garden Club of America by Alice G. B. Lockwood

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Oriental Rugs and Carpets
by Arthur U. Dilley, M.A.

A leading authority here presents the most recent disclosures of scholarship and describes every type of rug, antique or modern, from a dozen famous Oriental rug centres. There are 16 superb color pages reproducing specimens from private collections and 64 pages of half-tones listing 200 specimens. "There is nothing like it at any price"—*New York Times*. $15.00

History of Palestine and Syria
by A. T. Olmstead
author of "History of Assyria"

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Points of View

The Polish Problem

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

In his generous review of my recent book "Can Europe Keep the Peace?" for which I am properly grateful, Professor Borchard raises the question of the possible substitution of Lithuania for the present Polish Corridor as a solution for the problem of Polish access to the sea. May I venture to express an opinion based upon a visit to the Polo-Lithuanian frontier and discussion of the question alike with Poles and Lithuanians?

The objections seem to me twofold, political and economic. The racial bitterness between the Poles and Lithuanians constitutes one of the most acute of the ethnic disputes of Europe. It arises primarily from the question of the possession of Vilna but toward the Poles the Lithuanians feel much as the Czechs toward the Austrian Germans. Over centuries there was a far going polonization of the Lithuanians. While Lithuania was in fact liberated from Russia, the true fear of this people is born of Polish not Russian dangers.

To turn Lithuania over to Poland would mean creating a new minority of upwards of two millions, solidly united alike in their desire to be free and in their hatred of the Poles. Such a transfer could only be accomplished by force, could only be maintained by arms. Beyond any question the Poles would resume the process of polonization. It would be in fact both a grave wrong to the Lithuanians and a new source of European unrest.

Professor Borchard will recall, doubtless, the similar experiment when after the Russo-Turkish War and despite the service of the Rumanian Army before Plevna Rumanian Bessarabia was transferred to Russia and Rumania compensated by Bulgarian Dobrudja. The result was disastrous alike in its local and in its larger consequences.

On the economic side access to the sea through Lithuania would be eccentric to the main lines of Polish traffic. Relatively little commerce follows the line of the Niemen—none, of course now, since the frontiers are closed, while the Vistula route bears the same relation to almost all of Poland as the Mississippi to that part of the United States between the Alleghenies and the Rockies. It is true that the river is little used at present, but all the railway lines lead parallel to it either to Danzig or Gdynia. Possession of the Lithuanian seacoast would at most only meet the military and not the economic aspects of the question.

Apart from the ethnic and economic aspects of the question, however, as a practical matter the Poles would not accept it more willingly than the Lithuanians. For they hold that the Corridor is Polish soil historically and ethnically and therefore inalienable. A union between Poland and Lithuania is sometimes discussed by the Poles as a natural reversion to former conditions. But a new partition, as they consider the retrocession of West Prussia, never.

FRANK H. SIMONDS.

Washington, D. C.

Mr. Crotty

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

The Saturday Review numbers me among its charter subscribers. I prize the paper, eagerly await its arrival, and am so well rewarded by its contents. But tonight, I am thrilled—and by one word, CROTTY'S, in the Bowling Green (October 31). Nostalgia perhaps, for I, too, used to browse in Crotty's and praise be, will browse again, for Mr. Crotty still lives—an ancient keeper of a modern book shop. Last summer when I saw him, his four-score and one years sat no more heavily than his three-score and seven when I first discovered him; no matter how one meets Mr. Crotty, it is always with a sense of personal discovery and one retains his friendship as a personal triumph. He was an old man to an earlier generation; he is young to this; he is ageless and custom does not stale.

That choice book on the upper shelf now as always awaits a delighted recipient. The moderns on the lower shelf and the sophisticates on the tables, "sell, of course, people want them, and they keep the business going, but these oldsters, ahh-h, *they* wrote books. I am reminded—" and a quotation from Plutarch or Emerson, Aristotle or Thoreau, from the Irish poets ancient or modern, or from the latest letter from some person of prominence, delights you. Mr. Crotty seems to have read everything from Plutarch to Agnes Repplier, to have had correspondence with everyone from Emerson ("when a youth in Boston") to Padraic Colum, from Beecher to Al Smith. I wonder what he has done with all those charming letters. And to this day, does one merely remark a recent experience, an interesting encounter, a charming friend, and immediately "Ah, yes, that reminds me, I have just the book you will enjoy" and my library is always the richer for that reminder.

It is still Mr. Crotty's custom to read until midnight and arise before dawn, his breakfast is the earliest served in Lansing, he walks until sunrise and then to his store to read some overlooked treasure until "the boy" comes to open up, or to write one of those letters (pounded out on an original Corona) it is such a delight to receive, particularly if one is Celtic and enjoys a bit of Gaelic. A gracious woman, beginning as a clerk, has gradually changed his store to a shop that pays and all the charities benefit, but Mr. Crotty, his residence, his habits, his scorn for commercialism in books remains unchanged. Helen Hull wrote of him but no one likes the description, the bitterness of that book flows to all her characters and touches the genial gentleman and makes him seem a sly admirer of an author he detests. A few people call him John, but his old friends are passing and he lives with their memories and his beloved books—not as a recluse but as a man whose life and thought have been touched by the great and near great and for whom life still holds many such contacts. Some years ago old Mrs. Applegate died—an ancient grand dame who had retired in her Victorian raiment to charity and good work and a scorn of fashions and manners of the frivolous 1900's. Mr. Crotty remarked sadly, "Now all the old characters of the town are gone." We smiled. Mr. Crotty is not a character, he is an institution. Long may he flourish! Crotty's Book Store—to my vision books, such books, and a genial gentleman emerging from the back of the store, fingers holding the place in the book under his arm and a booming, "Well, well, well, bless my soul if it isn't—" I want to go back to Lansing and browse in Crotty's Bookstore.

And thank Mr. Leavitt for putting Crotty's in the *Review*.

HELEN M. MARTIN.

Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Madame Blavatsky

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

You print a long letter in your issue of November 21 from a couple of Theosophists, attacking my recent biography of their prophetess, Madame Blavatsky, "The Mysterious Madame." In so far as they assure your readers that I am ignorant of my subject and her published books, I need not waste your space with a reply; that sort of accusation betrays the weakness of the case of those who make it. Nor need I make any comment on your correspondents' defense of Madame Blavatsky's notorious plagiarism, except to remind your readers that she strenuously and indignantly denied them, especially when she was writing in the guise of a Mahatma in a Tibetan retreat.

The only point in the letter which really calls for reply is the writers' absolutely untrue statement that I do not refer to the New York *Sun's* apology to Madame Blavatsky after her death for various statements it had printed about her. I describe the incident on pages 284 and 294 of my book. I point out the absurdity of some of the *Sun's* charges, though any reader of my book, the first unbiased account of this remarkable woman, will recognize that other charges for which the newspaper apologized were true.

The writers of the letter evidently accept the conventional Theosophical notion that Mme. Blavatsky was a creature of a higher order of humanity than themselves, and you, and I, and the rest of us. On this hypothesis her wildest statements might be accepted as truth, even when they contradict ascertained facts—as they usually did. But people who do not share the view that she was divinely appointed found a curiously quarrelsome and internecine sect of pseudo-Oriental sentimentalists, will prefer the proven facts about her life and career to her own fantastic claims.

C. E. BECHHOFER ROBERTS.

Leylands Farm, England.

Bubble and Squeak

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

In "Maid in Waiting" Mr. Galsworthy repeatedly mentions "bubble and squeak" as a constant and peculiar attribute of his heroine.

I had always supposed "bubble and squeak" to be a nautical term for corned beef and cabbage. The Oxford Concise says "cold meat fried with chopped vegetables." While this is a fair description of the book, perhaps, just how did the author mean it as applied to Duing?

E. NEARING.

Flushing, N. Y.

Pound and the "Cantos"

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

A romantic misconception of the nature of poetry, implicit in the question "What does this *mean?*" vitiates the popular approach to any poem not so immediately comprehensible as, say, "Thanatopsis." It implies that since poetry is itself a paraphrase, it must in turn be paraphrasable (that is to say, it must at any time be adequately convertible into prose); in other words, it must "mean" something that can be isolated, reduced to another form, and thrown back at the examiner. Also, poetry must be unilinear: that is, it must tell a recognizable story, or expound and develop a recognizable idea, progressively and on a single plane. Accordingly, poetry may legitimately be "difficult" or "obscure" only if the difficulty or the obscurity conceals a definite recoverable meaning (read "message"? "sentiment"?): in which case we may dig, if we want to, with the assurance of eventual "understanding."

This familiar criticism, which has been used against almost every first-rate poet of our time, is generally supposed to be the defense of the classic "old" in the face of revolutionary "modernist." Actually, however, it is itself the modernism. The idea that a poem must "mean" something is a comparatively recent idea, and can be used just as effectively, or ineffectively, against "The Parlement of Fowles" and "King Lear" as against "The Waste Land" and Ezra Pound's "A Draft of XXX Cantos" (Paris: The Howes Press). But the classic conception was always that a work of art should *say* and *be*, not that it should *state* and *mean;* and it is this classic conception of a pure, non-predicatory art that is being restated today by a few men like Ezra Pound (in the "Cantos," though not in most of the minor poems, and certainly not in his criticism), T. S. Eliot (in "The Waste Land," "Ash-Wednesday," "Marina," but not in such pieces as "The Hippopotamus"), Igor Stravinsky (in the "Œdipus," the "Symphonie des Psaumes," though not in the "Sacré du Printemps"), Cocteau, Chirico, and Cropius. No amount of digging will unearth a "meaning" in the work of these artists. You will discover precious things—beauties of technique, richnesses of emotional association, and so forth—, but you will come no nearer to a solution of the riddle "What does it *mean?*". For the riddle is imaginary; there is not, and never has been, such a riddle; and to complain of the difficulty you have in "understanding" such a poem as "XXX Cantos," is ridiculously to lament your inability to see the stars if you are burrowing head-first into the ground.

Less invalid than the "unintelligibility" criticism, though by no means sound, is the objection that an extraordinary apparatus of historical and literary erudition is necessary for the enjoyment of the "Cantos." It is obvious that a tremendous amount of factual knowledge has gone into the making of the poem. Historical documentation, ranging over time and space, involving literatures and mythologies familiar and unfamiliar, recording events of universal significance with an emphasis neither lesser nor greater than that accorded the narration of imaginary or purely personal events—this is one of the devices of the poem: a major device, to be sure, but no more than a device. Now it is true that enjoyment of any work of art is intensified by a comprehension of the devices of its composition; but it by no means follows that ignorance of the ways of these devices precludes enjoyment. This would be true only if the work were created for the devices, in which case it would be a virtuosity, not a poem or a picture or a quartet. It should never be forgotten that the devices exist for the composition, not the composition for the devices. When "XXX Cantos" fails, as it frequently does, it is usually because the poet has lost sight of the whole in his preoccupation with some device or other—usually the scholarship device. Much of the Malatesta business, for example, is documentation simply for the sake of documentation; and even if one were familiar with the background of this particular episode in Renaissance history (and I'm not), Cantos VIII and IX, for all their vigor of execution, would still seem lifeless, clogged by the dead mass of allusion and arcane detail. But this does not raise the question of "intelligible" or "unintelligible," or that of the necessity of possessing an erudition adequate to Mr. Pound's.

It is easy, as I have said, to overestimate this necessity. Let me take an example, from the twenty-third Canto:

And that was when Troy was down, all right,
superbo Ilion. . . .
And they were sailing along
Sitting in the stern-sheets,
Under the lee of an island
And the wind drifting off from the island.
"Tet, tet. . .
what is it?" said Anchises.
"Tethnéké," said the helmsman, "I think they
Are howling because Adonis died virgin."
"Huh! tet. . . ." said Anchises,
"well, they've made a bloody mess of that city."

Here, if you will, a certain amount of added enjoyment is to be obtained if you know about Anchises and Troy, if you are familiar with the Rossetti ballad travestied in the first line, if you have enough Greek (rather more, it would seem, than Anchises had) to be able to recognize *tethnéké*, and can connect that with the Adonic liturgies. But these facts are not essential. What is essential is sympathy—an ear keen enough to analyze the brilliant clash of tones, and a sensibility acute enough to harmonize this clash as the poet has harmonized it. In this particular example the working of Mr. Pound's favorite device is obvious: it is a writing on two planes at once, the annihilation of unilinear composition. It is more than the fusion of two vocabularies, or tones; more than the imposition of a colloquial contemporary tone upon a traditional epic tone: it is the simultaneous creation not only of past and present, but of two emotional attitudes; it is the arrest of time and individuality in a vertical synthesis of time and individuality. Ezra Pound is always, in his own early words,

Suddenly discovering in the eyes of the very beautiful
Normande cocotte
The eyes of the very learned British Museum assistant.

His method is identification of period with period, of personality with personality, in a continual present. He is not an archæologist or an historian, though archæology and historiology serve his devices. His periods and his personages are exactly what he has called them—*personæ*, "masks," of his own time and his own personality.

The "Cantos" are to be read, then, not as a kind of historical jig-saw puzzle, not as a scholarly υτρωματα, a crazy-quilt of names, places, and events. They are poetry, with no other purposes and responsibilities than those which naturally devolve upon poetry. They should be read, and criticized, not as predicatory documents, but as poems. In this brief letter I have been unable to comment upon their technical excellencies and failures, their flights and lapses of conception and execution. Rather, I have tried to forestall a more fundamental criticism, a criticism which would be impossible if our esthetic were pure. For it is only with a pure mind, a mind stripped of schoolroom cant and romantic irrelevancies, that we can approach pure poetry, which makes no concessions. "Anyone," says Kung, in 'Canto XIII,' "can run to excess. It is easy to shoot past the mark. It is hard to stand firm in the middle."

DUDLEY FITTS.

The Choate School.

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*. As for reasons of space ninety percent of the inquiries received cannot be answered in print, a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

V. C. F., Pittsburgh, Kansas, asks about the editors and notable contributors of the Cornhill Magazine, *in whose history he is interested.*

THE *Cornhill* rose from a bright idea of Mr. George Smith. In 1860 there had been monthly reviews for more than a century and the publication of novels in parts was at its height. Why not, said this publisher, combine the two, so as to give the public, for what was then the cheapest magazine price, the contents of a general review and a monthly instalment of the best fiction? *Macmillan's Magazine*, some two months before, had inaugurated the shilling price; the *Cornhill* met this figure. For the first number Father Prout wrote

With Fudge or Blarney, or the Thames on fire
Treat not thy buyer;
But proffer good material—
A genuine Cereal,
Value for twelve pence, and not dear at twenty,
Such wit replenishes thy Horn of Plenty.

Thackeray was editor till April, 1862, and most Americans first heard of the magazine through his famous essay, "Thorns in the Cushion," the undying plaint of a tender-hearted editor who must be cruel only to be kind. After him came Leslie Stephen—Virginia Woolf's father—and James Payn, but the magazine never lost the "Thackeray touch" in its essays. Sir Edward Cook, from whose "Literary Recreations" (Macmillan, London, 1919) I lifted most of this, says "The *note* of the *Cornhill* is the literary note, in the widest sense of the term; its soul is the spirit of that humane culture, as Matthew Arnold describes it in the pages, reprinted from the *Cornhill*, of "Culture and Anarchy." Meredith said of Leslie Stephen's style that its only sting was "an inoffensive, humorous irony that now and then stole out for a roll over, like a furry cub, or the occasional ripple on a lake in gray weather."

Thackeray set the pace in fiction; Trollope, Lever, George Eliot, Mrs. Gaskell, Charlotte Brontë, Wilkie Collins, Charles Reade, Meredith, William Black, James Payn, Henry Seton Merriman, Thomas Hardy, kept it up. Ruskin roused excitement; Matthew Arnold disseminated sweetness and light. John Addington Symonds, R. L. Stevenson, wrote essays for it; Tennyson, Swinburne, and both the Brownings wrote its poetry. In January, 1910, it published a Jubilee Number, in which Sir Edward Cook's paper first appeared. "What a collection of first editions," he muses as he looks over the volumes, "he might make by cutting its threads!"

J. B., Osakis, Miss., asks for a few good books on philately; he has P. H. Thorp's "Stamp Collecting, How and Why" (Scott). He adds, "There are millions of literary stamp collectors; why not a review once in a while of such books? For instance, Thorpe's book is a gem; even those who don't collect would not be able to lay it down once they started reading it. I quite understand this curious charm; I never collected stamps—they collect themselves around this department whose clients are far-flung—but a really good book about stamps I will read to absorption. For instance, E. M. Allen's "America's History as Told in Postage Stamps" (Whittlesey), and a new book just from Whittlesey House in time for the holidays, "Geography and Stamps: Stamps in the World's History," by Kent B. Stiles. Then there is that tremendous big book, "The Pageant of Civilization," by F. B. Warren (Century), a wide review of the subject; there is Jenkins's standard "The Stamp Collector" (Jenkins), an English work in its second edition, the little "Peeps at Postage Stamps," by S. C. Johnson, published here by Macmillan, and the old favorite, "Wonderland of Stamps," by W. D. Burroughs (Stokes), the last two for younger readers—though age does not count for much in this matter. There are the publications of the Scott Stamp and Coin Co. of this city and of Stanley Gibbons of London and this city, and if one wishes to branch out into the records of the postal service, there is a fine book, "Old Post Bags," by A. F. Harlow (Appleton).

Z. B. S., Erie, Pa., asks if any other modern writers besides O'Neill and Robinson Jeffers have written plays with the Greek tragedies as their theme, as a drama reading circle would like to read them. Hugo von Hoffmannsthal's "Elektra" has been translated; it was a storm center in a decade more susceptible to bad weather on the stage, when Richard Strauss set it to music. Perez Galdos wrote an "Elektra" which was translated in *Drama* in 1911. Von Hoffmannsthal adopted "Œdipus the King" from Sophocles for a libretto for Richard Strauss, and wrote a "Helen"; these have not been translated; his "Elektra" was put into English by Arthur Symons. Barrett Clark in "A Study of Modern Drama" (Appleton) analyzes this play, pointing out its differences in spirit and form from the Greek, and quoting from Hoffmannsthal's article on Eugene O'Neill. Emile Verhaeren wrote a "Helen in Sparta" (translated) with a curious modern twist to the fate-driven theme, and Stephen Phillips a poetic play, "Ulysses." Mr. Clark's book just quoted would be useful to this group; he often brings out differences in Greek and modern concepts of tragedy. I see that the Oxford University Press as the result of the O'Neill success has had such a run on Gilbert Murray's translation of "Electra" that the house is beginning politely to wonder if something should not be done about retroactive royalties.

M. V. N. S., Philadelphia, Pa., asks for books to keep an unemployed youth of twenty-three cheered up; he is of Syrian parentage, has run elevators, sold bananas, driven an undertaker's wagon, and likes Will Durant's book, some of John Dewey's, and books on cipher codes and football. This assortment reminds me of a letter I lately received, straight from the heart of an eleven-year-old girl: "I love all A. A. Milne writes and have read 'Winnie-the-Pooh' and 'The House at Pooh Corner' again and again. Of more serious books I prefer 'The Education of a Princess.' I like anything about Russian history and the Little Colonel stories," and if that letter surprises you, you don't know much about the selective tastes of this time of life.

Why not direct this youth—as he is to find his books at the admirable Philadelphia Public Library—to the new "Only Yesterday," by Frederick L. Allen (Harper)? Thus he would have entertainment—who would not be captivated by this record of his own past? We are all in this book, somewhere amid the shouts and murmurs—and solid, stimulating instruction; he might know more about what may be on the way if he thus found out what had lately passed. Then let him wind back through Mark Sullivan's "Our Times" and see if that does not take his mind off the disconcerting present.

Then lead him joyfully back to today by means of Christopher Morley's "Swiss Family Manhattan" (Doubleday, Doran). I hope it is out by the time this gets into print, lest I spill untimely the news that this modern Swiss Family is airship-wrecked on the mooring-mast of the Empire Building, descending therefrom for study of our wild and strange civilization. I do not know what fiction cheers up other people—I have known readers to come up like wilted geraniums under a shower of novels that daunted me, and vice versa—but I know that "Albert Grope," by F. O. Mann (Harcourt, Brace) stays on the most reachable place near my easiest chair, and that I pull its pages up over me like a down quilt. This is a sketchy sort of answer; the American Library Association, 520 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, has taken up the matter in a serious way and issued a leaflet "The Public Library and the Depression," reprinted from the Wilson Bulletin, with lists of books by which to improve enforced leisure, saying "the latest and soundest information on timely subjects must be at once assembled in order to give readers an intelligent understanding of the present economic situation."

A Letter from Dublin

By PADRAIC COLUM

SINCE the suspension of *The Irish Statesman* there are only two organs in the whole of Ireland that a writer of any standing would care to appear in: they are the *Dublin Magazine*, edited by Seumas O'Sullivan, and *Studies*, the organ of University College, conducted by the Jesuit Fathers; neither is very much in evidence, being quarterlies. I need not say that *Studies* is not for the encouragement of the revolutionary and the experimental; in matters of scholarship it keeps a high level. The *Dublin Magazine* is always distinctive and interesting. But these two provide very narrow channels for the intellect of Ireland to manifest itself in. Needless to say, the intellect of Ireland is showing itself in other fields. While there isn't a single publisher in Dublin who has more than two good names on his list, London publishers' lists are more filled than ever with books by new Irish writers.

And this brings me to a rather odd fact. One organization in Ireland is turning out books by the thousands, having in the last three years put fifty thousand volumes into circulation. This is a Gaelic publication office financed by the Free State Government. When we remember that Ireland, in the main, is a non-reading country, this output is surprising. The bulk of it is translation—translation into Gaelic of all kinds of books, mainly, as far as I can make out, of mystery stories and sentimental romances from English. Who reads them? Well, since Gaelic is compulsory in the schools and since there is hardly anything in modern Gaelic that anyone but a philologist would have much interest in reading, a great supply of books is needed by students and teachers, and the reading public that is being turned out by the schools. Need these books be on such a mediocre level, I often ask? I suppose they needn't be, but the Minister of Finance who has charge of this department, has given the order that quantity is an important element—reading matter for Gaelic Ireland has, for a time, to be in quantity-production. The result is that writers who have any readiness in Gaelic are making incomes in Ireland; they are taking the line of least resistance, and are offering their public books for the original of which they don't have to seek far. But how odd that when one masters a Celtic speech "like the rattling of war-chariots," the books one finds to read range from "Robinson Crusoe" to the novels that go into Hollywood films.

A few grains of real literary nourishment appear amongst all this chaff. Through this enterprise a new edition of Douglas Hyde's "The Love Songs of Connacht" has appeared; if there was nothing else in modern Gaelic except this collection of folksongs, it would be worth while learning the language to know them. Then there has recently been published an autobiography of a native of the Blaskets—those islands off the coast of Kerry that form the only fragment of medieval Europe; this book, "The Islander," is as original as might be expected from a life where the language, customs, means of living are surprisingly remote. Then Neil Munro, that Scottish writer who never had proper recognition, has had one of his books translated into the Gaelic that his heroes speak in: those who are instructed in these matters assure me that the translation of "John Splendid" ("Iain Aluinn") make an addition to our youthful Gaelic literature. One authority says:

> It all goes into Irish like a hand into its proper glove. Once again we are made to feel what a magnificent language Irish is (or was) and how feelingly it conveys its own magic, that of fields, hills, woods, the sea, and all the fresh instincts of the heart. We are fortunate in having a few lucky survivors from that old world who can put down for us in readable prose the rich language they heard in the cradle or by the turf fire.

This traditional richness is going fast in Ireland. And yet, even now, one is amazed at the richness it can still show. From Galway down up into Connemara, for a distance of about a hundred miles, there is a belt in which the Gaelic life has hardly changed—the people are farmers and fishermen on the smallest possible scale, still weaving and spinning and carrying on their few traditional household arts. Here one can find story tellers by the score—I mean story tellers with a great traditional repertoire and a highly developed art. They are not all old men, either; some are in their thirties, some are even in their twenties. And at last, the collecting of Irish folk-lore is being systematized by a learned and devoted young professor of the National University, Dr. De Largy. Oddly enough, the most modern of institutions has given indispensable aid to the Irish Folk-lore Institute's efforts—this is being done by the Rockefeller Foundation. A small grant from them has enabled Professor De Largy to get local assistants, who are now gathering in material from every corner of Ireland, not in thousands of words but in hundreds of thousands of words—the old

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shanachies are talking into Ediphones, and not only the stories but their manner of delivery is being recorded. The Rockefeller Foundation gives aid to cultural monuments that are in danger of perishing, and I cannot imagine assistance given anywhere that is more timely than that sent into this field. Not only is an enormous material being saved for those are interested in cultural origins and erary backgrounds, but forms of spe words, are being recovered that ar the greatest enhancement to the reviving Gaelic language.

Whether or not the revival of Gaelic language and literature will come to be an accomplished fact, there is no doubt but the revival movement in the past thirty years has given freshness and distinction to Irish literature in English. Take the latest book published by one of the younger poets, Austin Clarke's "Pilgrimage" (New York: Farrar&Rinehart). In this collection the poet has brought his art to a curious kind of perfection. I do not say that he has written better poetry than in previous volumes, but I think that what is most characteristic in his vision has been given clearest expression in this latest book of his. His muted verses belong to the world of half-lights, remembered visions, and lost forms of a lapsed civilization. Austin Clarke's is the Ireland where Queen Gormlai writes her "learned and pitiful ditties," where the Woman of Beare pleases the Captains of the armies and the lawyers who break lands, where the monks on an island in the western main throw themselves on beds of nettles to rid themselves of a tempting vision, and where poets on a desolate mountainside meet her who is the spirit of the land. Through some strange process he has been able to identify himself with the Gaelic poets of seventeenth century Ireland—he writes in the temper of these dispossessed men, as if he had actually trudged the roads they trudged, crossed the waters they crossed, and like them, separating himself from the people he sings to by dealing only with the most tragic figures in their tradition. The landscape is blurred with rain; the light is the light before or after a storm.

Gray holdings of rain
Had grown less with the fields,
As we came to that blessed place
Where hail and honey meet.
O Clonmacnoise was crossed
With light: those cloistered scholars
Whose knowledge of the gospel
Is cast as metal in pure voices,
Were all rejoicing daily,
And cunning hands with gold and jewels
Wrought chalices to flame.

(Continued on next page)

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A Letter from Dublin

(Continued from preceding page)

A careful reader will notice that this poet brings into English a more deliberately-used and subtle assonance than has been in it hitherto. The poet seems resolved to get into Irish poetry written in English some of the effects of the woven vowel-sounds that are in Gaelic verse. "Assonance," he writes by way of comment on the poems in his new volume, "takes the clapper from the bell of rhyme. In simple patterns, the tonic word at the end of the line is supported by a vowel-rhyme in the middle of the next line." And he assures us that assonance—and there is no doubt but that he is right in this—permits lovely words, neglected for the reason that there are no rhymes for them, to take the tonic place in the line.

If he wanted to back up his innovation in verse, Austin Clarke could not do better than make quotation from a programme that an Irish critic, William Larminie, put forward nearly forty years ago. Larminie noted the burden of technique which the long development of English verse has placed upon present-day poets, and had this to say on the subject:

> One writer who has not the gift of fluency tends to become obscure; for the external requirements of art must at all costs be met, and direct simplicity of expression is unavoidably and unconsciously sacrificed. Of this class of poet Rossetti is a conspicuous example. The tendency of others, on the contrary, from whom the "full flowing river of speech" wells more irresistibly, is to dilute the idea. Difficulties of metre and rhyme are evaded by bringing forward a multitude of words and phrases from which the necessary expressions can easily be selected—the process as a rule, involving much circumlocution and the presentation of the idea in minute fragments, so that twenty stanzas are needed where two ought to suffice.

Larminie was all for shedding rhyme from English verse. He gave convincing reasons for such departure, maintaining:

> Latin, which has much more perfect quantity, has no stress. But English has stress of a very energetic kind, which helps out the quantitative deficiencies. French has neither. German, like English, has both. But in German the consonants are often so harsh that with English, in this respect so much more melodious, the final superiority among modern languages remains. Yet, having this superiority, enjoying these superior resources, and subject to the obligations imposed upon them, it has nevertheless also taken upon itself other burdens, it has allowed another language possessed of far inferior resources, to impose upon it the law necessitated by its inferiority. It has accepted the unnecessary burden of rhyme.

He went on to suggest an idea that should have an especial appeal to Irish poets; he suggested that assonantal verse should be made more use of. His formula for a new departure in English verse was "quantity sweetened by assonance, and assonance strengthened by quantity."

Austin Clarke has not concerned himself much with quantitative verse. He makes remarkable use of assonance. I observe in reading his assonantal poems that such verse is most effective in a short lyric such as the lovely "Planter's Daughter," but that, at least as used in "Pilgrimage," it is not a form in which to get a story told. The poem that shows all Austin Clarke's curious accomplishment and his power of creating in the Gaelic mode is in his "Aisling." The "Aisling" is a special form amongst the last of the Gaelic academic poets. It deals with the poet's meeting with the personification of Ireland who utters a prophecy to him. Austin Clarke, as he recreates this form, evokes, too, the world of the last Gaelic academic poets. I quote from the five stanzas of this poem:

When the shadows on wet grass are heavier
Than hay, beside dim wells the women gossip
And by the paler bushes tell the daylight;
But from what bay, uneasy with a shipping
"Breeze, have you come?" I said, "O you cross
The blue thread with the crimson on the framework,
At darkfall in a house where nobles throng
And the low oil climbs up into the flame?"

☘ ☘

Padraic Colum, poet and dramatist, divides his time between the United States and Ireland, was formerly an editor of the Irish Review, *and was a founder of the Irish National Theatre.*

The New Books
Fiction

(Continued from page 415)

that the in-laws are drawn into it and the children never get out of it; they are a business too, a grain and forage business in which, with the advantage given to British trade by our Civil War, they make fortunes which for the time and place are enormous. The horse thief's grandchildren are as solidly established as the Forsytes in propriety; if being Irish they escape the extreme of Victorian smugness, this is made up for by the narrowness of their Irish Catholicism; their minds are all formed by priests who are used to controlling half-barbarous parishes, and who have added to the scholastic list of the deadly sins a more than Victorian horror of the sins of the flesh.

The setting is, except for superficial differences, much like that of "The Forsyte Saga"; and the story is like that of every chronicle one has ever imagined. It is a sort of type or norm of the family chronicle; one can plot its course unerringly before reading it. There is the fine old rough diamond of a grandfather, the horse thief's son, who founded the fortune, and who is scolded, loved, and feared by his children; there is the daughter who makes an attempt to break away from the stuffiness of her family and the suitable marriage they have arranged; there is her brother, the climax of the family's success, who takes an unmixed delight in the wealth he has made, the hideous house he has built, the tedious position he has achieved; there is the artistic grandson, who wavers for a long time between family affection and his unconventional longings. There is also the host of minor relatives, each one with his idiosyncrasy carefully assigned to him, who serve for little more than to crowd the stage. The only important character who does not run strictly to type is the runaway daughter, Caroline; she stands out among the lay-figures as a woman of real charm, and since she is a devout Catholic, married to a man who is kindness itself to her but whom she loathes in her flesh ever since her ignorant wedding night, hers is a real problem. But her share of the story is tantalizingly small. The character of Caroline seems to promise better things from Miss O'Brien in the future; in her present she has trusted too much to individuality of background, and has not realized the importance of originality of the story.

LOVE AMONG THE CAPE-ENDERS. By HARRY KEMP. Macaulay. 1931. $2.50.

Here are all the ingredients of a popular success. With his usual gusto, Harry Kemp splatters his book with liberal gobs of light sex-affairs, fist-fights, fires, pseudo-scandals, and sophomoric rhapsody. Under transparent disguises, there appear many "men and women, now famous." The reader is treated to the "inside story" of the foundation of what is presumably the Provincetown Playhouse, and whatever appeal the book has, it manages through the scandal-mongering devices of the key-novel. The plot is turgid and involved, the treatment is marred by flamboyant, hyperbolic writing, and centers chiefly about the character of Stephen Groton, poet and "soldier of song, whose physical health was that of twenty raging devils; whose poet's

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ILLUSTRATION FOR "WITHOUT MY CLOAK," BY KATE O'BRIEN

The Compleat Collector.
RARE BOOKS · FIRST EDITIONS · FINE TYPOGRAPHY
Conducted by Carl Purington Rollins & John T. Winterich
"*Now cheaply bought for thrice their weight in gold.*"

Restitution: A Fiction--

LONG before he acquired true book wisdom (and that was sometime after he was fifty), Littlefield had been perpetually fascinated by those sporadic eruptions into the domain of commerce known as rummage sales. He found stuff for quiet hilarity both in the strange medley of merchandise and in the antics of the rudderless ladies who tried so hard and so unpatronizingly to make it appear that from childhood up they had extorted a quotidian crust only after hours of desperate haggling. It evoked in him compassion no less than amusement to note the evolution of a self-deceit that really hypnotized them into the conviction that the tawdry and time-stained relics under their hands were purple and fine linen.

And the relics themselves! What effrontery on the part of some householders to offer them! And what eagerness on the part of representatives of households of lesser degree to possess them! A collapsible opera hat whereof one sector would not quite collapse, and which had gone green from black years ago, and was now going black again—who on earth would want that? Yet Littlefield had seen two teamsters from an adjacent lumber-yard almost come to blows as a means of deciding which of them had set eyes on it first, and growl at each other things that for one red instant shot the rudderless ladies back into their decorous channels. He had seen a shambling dowdy whose remarkable facial color scheme accented a red nose and a black eye depart weeping with a handful of wedding-cake trinkets, and an Italian shoemaker bear off in the ecstasy of discovery a tarnished silver-plated cup that had been awarded to Harold Everett Hartley for winning the two-twenty low hurdles in the 1909 duel meet between Lanesboro and East Nutley High Schools.

But that had been years before. Nowadays when Littlefield attended a rummage sale it was not in the role of a benign amateur of sociology, but as a wolf strayed from the pack. He had become a book collector—how and why are details of no moment here. Once or twice he had made finds at second-hand bookstores; as he averaged perhaps one find to every half ton of trash he brought home, the bookstores were decidedly the net gainers, but Littlefield remembered only the finds. And if poaching were successful in such well-guarded preserves, what might the hunt not produce in virgin forests?

Put in practice, the theory had not at all measured up to his hopes. He had explored a thousand piles of books in as many queer corners where the sellers had not the slightest conception of book values (except that a red plush binding was the last word in bibliopegic luxury), but he had never found anything worth taking away. Still, and properly, he never neglected to visit any rummage sale on which he chanced. And he assisted chance by frequenting the meaner quarters of the city, looking twice at every establishment with a To Let sign, and his heart would trip faster every time he saw behind an unwashed shop window a miscellany of frayed collars, wire hat frames, and tattered riding crops.

One day his aimfully aimless wanderings brought him to an enthralled halt before a sign which read: "Sale of Used Articles. Benefit St. Paul's Hospital for Crippled Children." The sign designated a sizable double store which appeared to be a veritable horn of superfluous plenty. Piles of wrinkled clothing displayed on makeshift tables outside were undergoing a vicious overhauling at the hands of a crowd whose every member resented the presence of every other, and said so; the windows were heaped high with domestic jetsam amid which several adventurous souls were having the time of their lives; a buzz of animated barter came through the open doors.

Littlefield walked casually in. The mob absorbed him, billiarded him off its collective shoulders, swept him at last into a quiet corner at the rear to consider how, when the time came, he might hope to emerge into outer air. But he was not yet ready to emerge. The quiet corner was flanked by columns of books.

To examine books laid on their sides and arranged in columns is an enterprise that calls for a high degree of patience, great dexterity of neck, and a contempt for dust-filled finger-nails, soiled cuffs, pains in back and thighs, and various related inconveniences. After Littlefield had toiled for more than an hour and succeeded in altering the whole topographic arrangement, his earthquake had upheaved nothing more sensational than a pictorial history of the Spanish-American War, a bound volume of the *Railway Age Gazette* for 1911, seven odd volumes of the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, a course in memory training, a table of logarithms, and a cheap reprint of Southey's "Life of Nelson" without a title page. He stood erect, or as nearly erect as tortured vertebræ would let him, while his eye despondently sought the exit. And on an adjacent table, half hidden by an array of culinary detritus, he saw a market basket filled with pamphlets. Cookbooks, obviously—the sort given away with the commodity which each of them would have constitute the major element of diet. So, at least, on top. Below was a stratum of old almanacs, but not old enough. Below that—

Littlefield's sharp intake of breath was certainly audible only to himself in the general hubbub. For all that he peered about covertly as he drew from the basket a quaking pamphlet that bore on its wrapper only *Sonnets. E. B. B. Reading [Not for Publication.]* 1847. The sugary effusions of a poetess of the coal belt? Not exactly. E. B. B. became the wife of Robert Browning, and her "Sonnets," since known to the world as "Sonnets from the Portuguese," are in this ephemeral form one of the scarcest books of the nineteenth century. Had not Littlefield only a few days before seen a copy catalogued at a thousand dollars, despite an unfortunate investiture of full crushed levant? The copy in his hands was in wrappers, as issued, spotless and smooth, the result of long and fortuitous incarceration in the core of a mass of cookbooks and almanacs.

He hunted no further—discoveries of such magnitude do not come in pairs. Hauling a miscellaneous handful of print out of the basket, he placed the "Sonnets" in the middle of the assortment and sought a member of the harassed sales force.

A somewhat distraught young lady, her

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features fixed in a smile that seemed to defy Demos to impair its resolute tranquillity, attempted once more to personalize that characteristic at sight of this customer whose place on the social ladder was evidently some rungs higher than that of the sweaty mob all about. Littlefield extended the parcel of pamphlets hesitantly. What if she examined it carefully? What if she saw? What if she knew?

"Five cents apiece," she announced. "Six—seven—eight. Forty cents. Interesting old things, aren't they? Shall I wrap them?"

"No, thank you. Yes, they are rather interesting. I have quite a few of them."

She was supposed to conclude the dialogue with "Indeed!" or some comparable token of courteous toleration. But no:

"Oh, you collect things—books?"

"Why, I read a lot," said Littlefield. He had used that phrase before. It was supposed to convey a bewildered incomprehension of the term collect.

"But surely you don't read seventy-five-year-old almanacs?" she persisted. "Of what possible concern is it to you what the weather will be on March 5, 1856? Oh, no!" and the horrid creature added with the only hint of raillery she had dared inject into her voice all this trying day, "One of those things is worth fifty thousand dollars, I suppose. Don't tell me Button What's-his-name hasn't signed some of them!"

Only the knowledge that in the ensuing excitement his precious parcel would be scattered and trampled to bits held Littlefield from fainting on the spot. His features slid into a sickly smile—such a very sickly smile that his cross-examiner really thought he was ill, accepted his forty cents (exact change) with unbecoming eagerness, and fled the scene with as much expedition as Littlefield himself. Unfortunately each chose the same direction for flight, and they were pushed face to face again at the door. The lady gave a little shriek, the impetus provided by which drove Littlefield headlong through an incoming half-dozen bargain hunters. They cursed; in his heart he thanked them, for they walled up the doorway effectively behind him—his pursuer was balked. And very happy to be. The image of the queer, respectable gentleman who had almost died on her hands remained in her mind for many a day.

Nightly for some weeks thereafter Littlefield enjoyed a ten-minute gloat over his "Sonnets." And nightly conscience came to plague him. At whose expense was the enormous but untaken profit represented in the purchase? Merely at that of the crippled children of St. Paul's Hospital. Wisely invested, the proceeds from the sale of his "Sonnets" would bring a dollar a week to some pathetic bedside forever. Opening the pamphlet delicately, he

. . . . thought once how Theocritus had sung
Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-for years

that knew not rickets, poliomyelitis, tuberculosis of the bone.

He restored the pamphlet to the protection of the collection of almanacs. For some evenings he did not disturb it. Not until Christmas Eve did he bring it out again for reverent inspection—this time with calm, untroubled spirit. For he had found a road out of his sentimental dilemma. There would always be crippled children; therefore he would keep the "Sonnets" by him throughout life, and leave it to the hospital on his death. He would eat his cake, yet the crippled children should have it, too.

Littlefield died in his sixty-third year—pneumonia, I believe. His library was dispersed at auction and the proceeds, as directed, turned over to a maiden sister in Pasadena whom he had not seen in twenty years. The sale was not a sensation, and was notable only for the miscellaneous character of the three-hundred-odd lots to which the catalogues reduced it. It netted some three thousand dollars, so that the maiden sister's old age was provided with an electric runabout and a mink coat. The best thing in the sale was an 1837 "Memoirs of the Life of the Late John Mytton," which brought three hundred dollars—I imagine Littlefield had got it for ten from some unenlightened bookseller who was deceived by its being a second edition.

The cataloguers found during their investigations a brown-paper parcel on which was written: "To be sold for the benefit of St. Paul's Hospital for Crippled Children. 'Not Death, but Love.'" Within was an assortment of almanacs and cookbooks, and the lot was bundled off to the ladies of St. Paul's for their next rummage sale, together with Littlefield's clothes, as duly set forth in his will. The clothes brought pretty good prices as relics of that sort go. Someone with a nose for book values found the "Sonnets" tucked inside a pamphlet of recipes and bore it off for a nickel.

J. T. W.

Three Cheshire House Books

THE VIGIL OF VENUS. Rendered into English Rhyme by JOSEPH AUSLANDER. New York: Cheshire House. 1931

THE GEORGICS OF VIRGIL. Translated into English Verse by JOHN DRYDEN. The same.

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS AND WHAT ALICE FOUND THERE. By LEWIS CARROLL. Illustrated by FRANKLIN HUGHES. The same.

THE quality of the Cheshire House editions has bettered as the series has advanced, and these three current items are all interesting as specimens of good printing. That none of them is of outstanding importance is due, I think, at least partly to the fact that they invite comparison with repeated reprintings of the same titles (except perhaps in the case of the Venus).

The present edition of the "Pervigilium Veneris" is a small quarto in the fine Centaur roman and Arrighi italic which have lately become available to American printers. They are charming type faces and grace any book which is printed in them. Here they are used without ornament save for a Renaissance border and several simple initials. The Latin text is printed in roman, the English rendering in italic. Mr. Auslander contributes a short introduction, and the passage from Pater's "Marius" is reprinted.

The "Georgics" is issued in a large folio format, done in the general style of Tonson's 1697 edition of Dryden's Virgil, save that it has been set in Baskerville. The paper in this as in the "Venus" is attractive—thin and flexible, with good color and surface. The restraint used in not bulking the volumes is highly commendable. The twenty original full-page engravings in Tonson's edition have been reprinted here. The photo-zinc plates, from difficult subjects, come out very well as to plate making and printing. The binding is in paper sides and leather back, strong and simple.

Mr. Hughes' illustrations for the "Looking Glass" are so good that one wishes they had been printed or drawn with a little more color—the effect is a bit too weak. The edition on the whole is a pretty satisfactory printing of the story, and Carroll's books, as we have pointed out, are among the most difficult to print satisfactorily. All three volumes show good presswork, and if one doesn't mind the complete absence of running heads, the composition is well handled.

R.

Miscellaneous

From *Thomas F. Madigan:* A catalogue of autograph letters and manuscripts. Among the company assembled to make up this book are Catherine d' Medici, Desmoulins, Franklin, Jefferson, Louise de la Vallière, two of the Louis's, Marguerite de Valois, Kipling, Pope, Schiller, Zachary Taylor (a fine letter about his candidacy for the Presidency), etc. One mystery in the catalogue is the price of $275 for a one page A. L. S. of President Harding's! Why bring that up? On the whole a varied collection of wide interest.

From *Dawson's Bookshop,* Los Angeles: A beautifully printed (by Grabhorn) catalogue of Rare Books. There is an introduction by A. Edward Newton, and his picture. An interesting item is Froben's edition of Agricola, "De Re Metallica," Basle 1556, together with President Hoover's translation, London 1912—an unusual combination at the fair price of $300. Unusual book catalogue printing. From the *Greyhound Press,* Winchester, Eng.: A modest list of books issued at that press.

Counter Attractions

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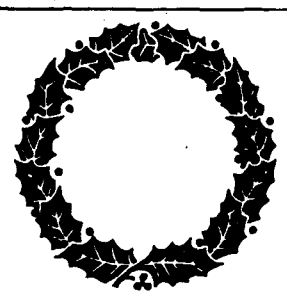

This Year Give Books

When *The Inner Sanctum* encounters any disdainful patronizing of best-sellers *per se*, it takes delight in pointing out that *Don Quixote* was actually a best-seller from the day of its publication some three hundred and twenty-five years ago.

Only one book out of a thousand is a best-seller, only one best-seller out of a thousand is a *Don Quixote*, but the citation is made simply to demonstrate that before the judgment seat of time it is no high crime and misdemeanor to get the top ranking on the WOMRATH best-seller list, like *Bernard Shaw* by FRANK HARRIS, or to be a favorite at R. H. MACY'S, like *Free Wheeling*, by OGDEN NASH.

The Inner Sanctum's final suggestions to those wise and civilized persons who this Christmas, more than ever, are saying it with books: 1) *Don't snub a book because it's a best-seller. . .* 2) *Don't pick a book simply because it's a best seller. . . .* 3) *Don't overlook* the *noble worst-sellers, like* MARY LEE—by GEOFFREY DENNIS. . . . 4) *Don't forget the old books, the gloriously* cheap *reprints, the books for the years—like* THE MODERN LIBRARY *edition of* DON QUIXOTE (936 *immortal pages for ninety cents*) . . . 5) *Don't disregard the new editions of old favorites of yesteryear—like the gift edition of* BAMBI, A LIFE IN THE WOODS *by* FELIX SALTEN. . . . 6) Don't hesitate to write for last-minute Christmas-list recommendations directly to your own book-seller or to

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Won't You
Will You
Won't You
Won't You

please look around for last week's issue of THE SATURDAY REVIEW and give your coupon-clipping fingers a reminiscent thrill?

Page 395 was an important page. There is work to be done and we think you will feel urged to spend the unavoidable two cents.

THE
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The PHŒNIX NEST

OF late we read with interest the account of *Admiral Bradley Fiske's* invention of a book that could be completely printed on two long strips of paper and sold for a few cents. It would cost, weigh, and bulk practically naught. True, a special sort of lorgnette holder would have to be purchased for a dollar or so, wherewith to read it, but then that would suffice for any book of the same kind. The outlay of a dollar and subsequent volumes would cost you practically nothing. Well, maybe we'll come to that. Maybe, in the future, one will be able to get about five hundred books of that kind on a single shelf. To those who read simply and solely for information it won't make any difference. They will be able to absorb facts and figures as well from several long galley proofs as from a tastefully bound and printed volume. But there are other factors that enter into reading and the purchase of books that don't seem to us to be taken into account. . . .

Bertha Constance Porter writes on the paper of the San Angelo Gun Club of San Angelo, Texas, to ask us what the words "agenbite of inwit" may signify. "Pangs of conscience" is about as near to it as we can get. . . .

Shaemas O'Sheel has now sent us his Antigone of Sophokles which did get printed. It is priced at two dollars and may be obtained of the author at 157 Clinton Street, Brooklyn, N. Y. . . .

Eunice Tietjens, the poet, is now Managing Editor of a new magazine, *The World Around*, published by the Inter-Continental Publishing Co., of 201 North Wells Street, Chicago. It is aimed at the general public. Miss Tietjens and her husband, Cloyd Head, the dramatist, recently returned from a trip to the South Seas. . . .

Hervey Allen, up at Cazenovia, N. Y., is very worried about something and relieves his mind to us about it in the following letter:

> I think some of our writers who visit Russia on Guggenheim fellowships ought to be asked to mention that the Communists on the Tibetan frontier are maintaining a bureau for lost and found yak cuds—on the ten year plan. That is, any lost yak cud, not claimed before this decade is up, will positively be destroyed no matter how the yak suffers (unless its owner is a member of Ogpu). So you can see what those Russians are like!
>
> Nevertheless, I think capitalistic societies like the Bickmanites or the S. P. C. A. might take "a hay" out of this yak cud idea, as quite a lot of cows up around Cazenovia, New York, just suffer horribly when they lose their cuds and there isn't a single bureau for lost and found cuds and things like that in the whole damn county.
>
> This isn't literary news, of course, but as one old rag chewer to another I feel sure you will have a warm feeling for any fellow mammal, cow or bull, that has lost its cud, and this little town is just the worst place in the world to lose a cud in. They don't even know why you look worried. People ought to know about it who own cars.

Marion Canby, wife of the distinguished editor in chief of this periodical, is to have a volume of poems, "High Mowing," published by Houghton Mifflin probably in March. The discriminating reader will be sure to note the freshness and originality of this work. . . .

Dale Warren, of the same firm, tells us that *Rafael Sabatini*, who is just finishing his American lecture tour, used to be a publisher. He was for several years a partner in the English firm of Martin Secker and had entire charge of the business during the war. While serving in this capacity, he had the honor of "discovering" *William McFee*, and published his first book, "Casuals of the Sea," prophesying for him a distinguished literary career. Now that "The Harbourmaster," Mr. McFee's fifteenth book, has just been published, Mr. Sabatini is considerably gratified at his own foresight. . . .

Anyone who has ever visited the Norris ranch at Saratoga, California, knows what croquet addicts both *Kathleen Norris* and her husband, *Charles Gilman Norris*, are. They also play the game at their winter home in Palo Alto. Apropos of this, Charles Norris recently telegraphed *Arthur McKeogh*, Associate Editor of *Good Housekeeping*, for advance proofs of his wife's new serial, "Young Mother Hubbard," and the following telegrams were exchanged: (From Mr. McKeogh) COMPLETE REVISED COPY DELIVERED STOP AND HOW IS OUR DEAREST CROKAY MINE AS WELL AS YOURS. (From Mr. Norris) WHAT DO YOU MEAN MY DEAREST CROKAY NO MALLETS IN MY QUESTION. (From Mr. McKeogh) I'M JUST TRYING TO BE WICKET. . . .

The Oxford University Press has published the first book of current fiction they have ever attempted, which is called "Mr. Fothergill's Plot," and contains eighteen hitherto unpublished stories by eighteen celebrated authors who include *Martin Armstrong, Thomas Burke, G. K. Chesterton, A. E. Coppard, E. M. Delafield, Storm Jameson, Sheila Kaye-Smith, Margaret Kennedy, Frank Swinnerton*, and *Rebecca West*. . . .

When *Knut Hamsun* travels he usually calls himself *Knut Pedersen*. That name is his birth-name, actually. At the age of four years Knut was taken by his father to the far north of Norway at Hamsund Bay, and when the famous writer later wanted a pseudonym he took "Hamsund." A careless typesetter left off the final "d." It is interesting that Hamsun's pen-name first appeared over an article on *Mark Twain*, who became famous to the world by his own pen-name. . . .

The deadline for the reception of manuscripts for "Contemporaries 1931," an anthology to be brought out by *Edward W. Titus*, editor and publisher of *This Quarter*, in Paris, has been postponed to January 1, 1932. The authors of accepted manuscripts will receive both an advance based on the length of the contributions and a pro-rata share of the royalties. All communications should be addressed to Edward W. Titus, 4 rue Delambre, Paris XIV, France. . . .

We have been meaning to thank our occasional correspondent, *The Carthaginian*, for a letter sent us way back the end of September, which, among other things, told of a visit the end of last August to Camber Sands, New Romney, Rye, Hastings, and Battle Abbey. We still have beautiful memories of Rye, one of the most glamorous spots in all England. . . .

The book *Edmund Wilson* has been writing, which attempts to provide an adequate kaleidoscopic picture of the United States in its era of depression, has, now that the possibilities of this coming winter of America's discontent are beginning to be revealed, been postponed to appear early in 1932. It will be published by Scribner. . . .

In the same Spring Covici-Friede will bring out a gypsy novel by *Konrad Bercovici*, who ten years ago used to frequent *Pascal Covici's* famous bookstore in Chicago. Bercovici-Friede! quite a similarity in names. Do they mean the same thing?

We see that the *Mary Hughes* who (Henry Ford *per contra*) was the original of the Mary who had a little lamb, has now passed away. She had been born ninety years ago in the Vale of Llangollen, North Wales. Staying at the Hughes farm, at the time of the lamb incident, which actually happened, was one *Miss Sarah Josepha Buel*, who wrote the poem immediately after the happening. Miss Buel afterward came to these States and married *Horatio Hale*, author and ethnologist. She died in Philadelphia in 1879. The other story is that one *John Roulstone* wrote the poem concerning a *Miss Mary Sawyer* who lived at Redstone Hill, Sterling, Massachusetts. *Henry Ford*, it may be remembered, bought part of a school at Sterling and had it set up again at Sudbury, Massachusetts, believing it to have been the true scene of the Lamb incident. Wouldn't you know, though, that the teacher would have turned the lamb out just because

It made the children laugh and play
to see a lamb at school!

That explains a whole lot of things in civilization! . . .

By the time you get this, Random House will have published "Idyll on the Desert," a new story by *William Faulkner*, issued in an edition of four hundred copies, each signed by the author. The book is printed by the Harbor Press and sells for three fifty a copy. Faulkner wrote the story while visiting in this city. The publishers tell us that nineteen separate inquiries for first editions of "Soldiers' Pay" appeared in a recent issue of the *Publisher's Weekly*. Which reminds us that we, picking up a third somewhere, only read that opus the other day. And mighty good we found it. Faulkner—though not in firsts—is one of the few modern American writers we are collecting. Also, as Random House intends to publish a bibliography of the works of *Virginia Woolf*, compiled by *Helen Davies McGlade*, they are anxious to learn of any variations in issue, printing, or publication which readers or owners of Virginia Woolf's books have discovered for themselves; and would further appreciate information bearing upon the publication of any work by Mrs. Woolf which has not been contained in any regular list of her works previously published, together with references to any critical work appearing in magazine or book form by or on Virginia Woolf. Any communication addressed to Helen Davies McGlade, 128 Chestnut Street, Boston, Mass., on this subject will be gratefully received and promptly acknowledged. . . .

THE PHŒNICIAN.

The New Books

(*Continued from page* 418)

imagination was that of a runaway horse that shies at every innocent, motile piece of paper, down long, dizzy white roads of possible, crashing collision!"

CREATIVE CAMPING. By JOSHUA LIEBERMAN. Association Press. 1931. $2.

Mr. Lieberman subtitles his book "A Coeducational Experiment in Personality Development and Social Living." So completely has he made the book a straightforward, unaffected account of the experiment that it is difficult to make comment on the volume anything but comment on its subject.

The book describes a summer camp for boys and girls dedicated to the belief that young people are profoundly ignorant of the "economic and social forces and problems in modern society," that "existing educational procedure tended to develop in children habits of acquiescence and standardized thinking and failed to cultivate creative capacity and well integrated personality," and that something could be done about it. Behind the camp is an organization known as Pioneer Youth of America, and behind Pioneer Youth a group of labor unions, labor representatives, and educators including John Haynes Holmes and Norman Thomas. Mr. Lieberman was director of the camp for its first six years, the period covered by the book.

The camp opened in 1924, with thirty-five boys and girls nine to sixteen years old. Mr. Lieberman tells simply of the surprise of the children at finding themselves their own masters—of the absence of rules and dicta and red tape with which he felt the ordinary camp or school was bound. He portrays the surprisingly quick acceptance by the children of responsibility, both for maintenance of the camp and for finding and developing their own activities.

His volume resolves itself into a case book for camp directors—many who run the more conventional type of camp could learn from its pages. Mr. Lieberman has avoided making it a tract or a preachment. With a style and attitude so simple as to be naive, he has merely told his story. Though it is obvious that the experiment attained a considerable degree of success in giving children social consciousness and individual strength that ordinary schooling usually misses, he lets the facts make the point clear. And this of course makes his tale a more convincing argument than page upon page of argument would be.

MAGAZINE ARTICLE READINGS. By *Ernest Brennecke, Jr.* and *Donald L. Clark*. Macmillan. $3.50.

EARLY AMERICAN TEXTILES. By *Frances Little*. Century. $4.

TWO UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE DEBATES. New York: Noble & Noble. $1.

A RABBI TAKES STOCK. By *Solomon Goldman*. Harpers. $2.50.

IT'S UP TO YOU. By *Bess M. Mendendieck*. New York: Meusser.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY'S BOOK OF DAYS. Day.

THE WRITING ART. By *Bertha W. Smith* and *Virginia C. Lincoln*. Houghton Mifflin. $2.50.

PHANTASTICA, NARCOTIC AND STIMULATING DRUGS. By *Louis Lewin*. Dutton. $3.75.

SEX HOSTILITY IN MARRIAGE. By *Thomas H. Van de Velde*. Covici-Friede. $7.50.

THE STAG AT EVE. Farrar & Rinehart. $3 net.

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